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RSPB first book of
trees

Derek Niemann



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Trees

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chlorine-free pulp, harvested from managed
sustainable forests.

Trees grow in all shapes and sizes. Some
are taller than houses. Some are little
bushes. Some are skinny. Others have
really thick trunks!

This book will help you name many of
the trees you will see in towns, cities
and the countryside. Find out about their
flowers and their fruit. Learn about the
shapes of their leaves. Which tree gives
us hazelnuts? And does a hornbeam
tree really have horns?

At the back of this book is a Spotter's Guide
to help you remember the trees you find.
You could also draw them in summer and
winter. Why not collect the fallen leaves?

Turn the page to find out more about trees!



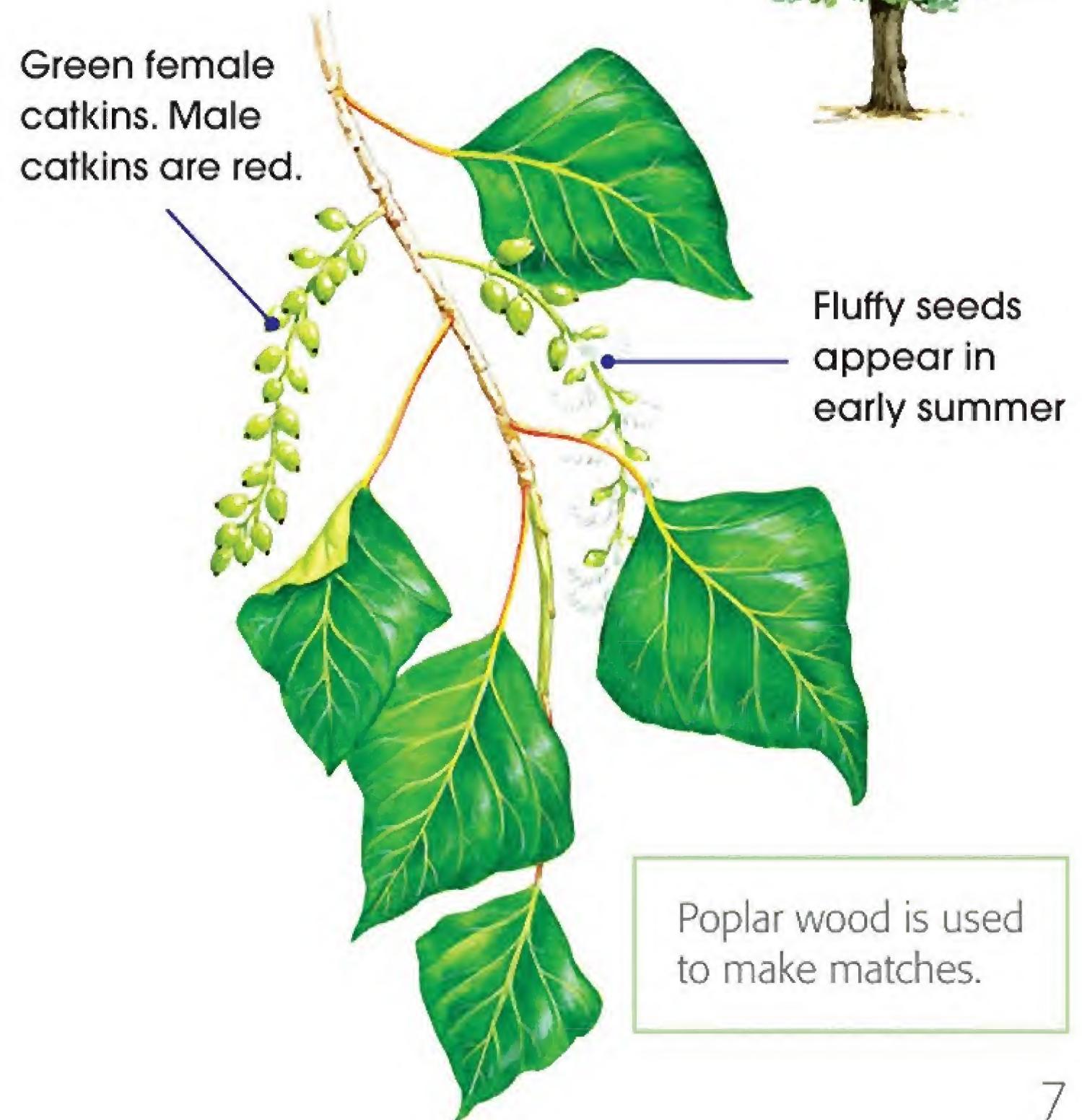
Silver birch

This tree is named for its silvery-white trunk. It grows very fast. A silver birch will be as tall as you when it is only three years old.



Black poplar

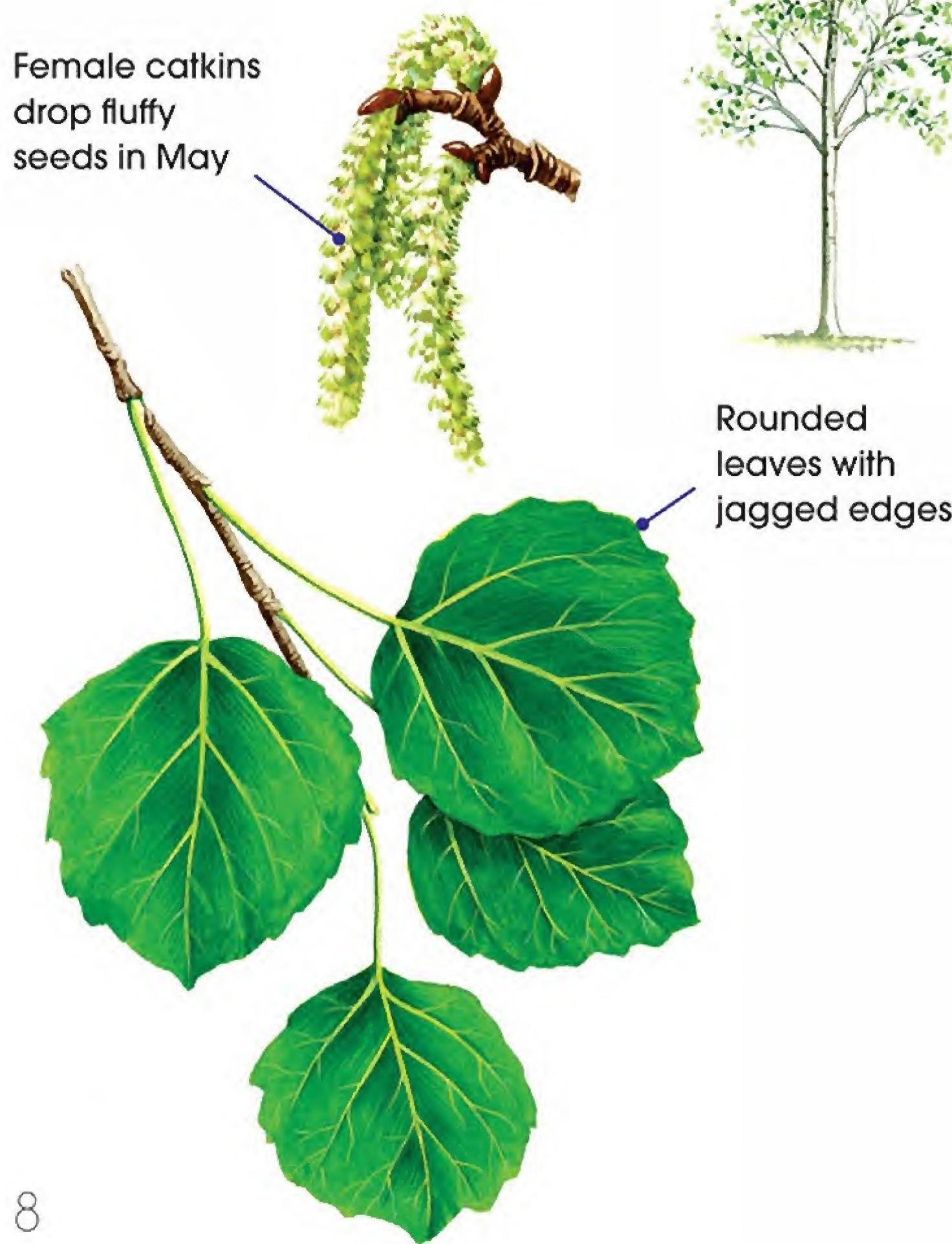
All poplar trees have broad leaves with very pointy tips. There are male poplar trees and female poplar trees. If there are no male trees nearby, then the females can not make any seeds.





Aspen

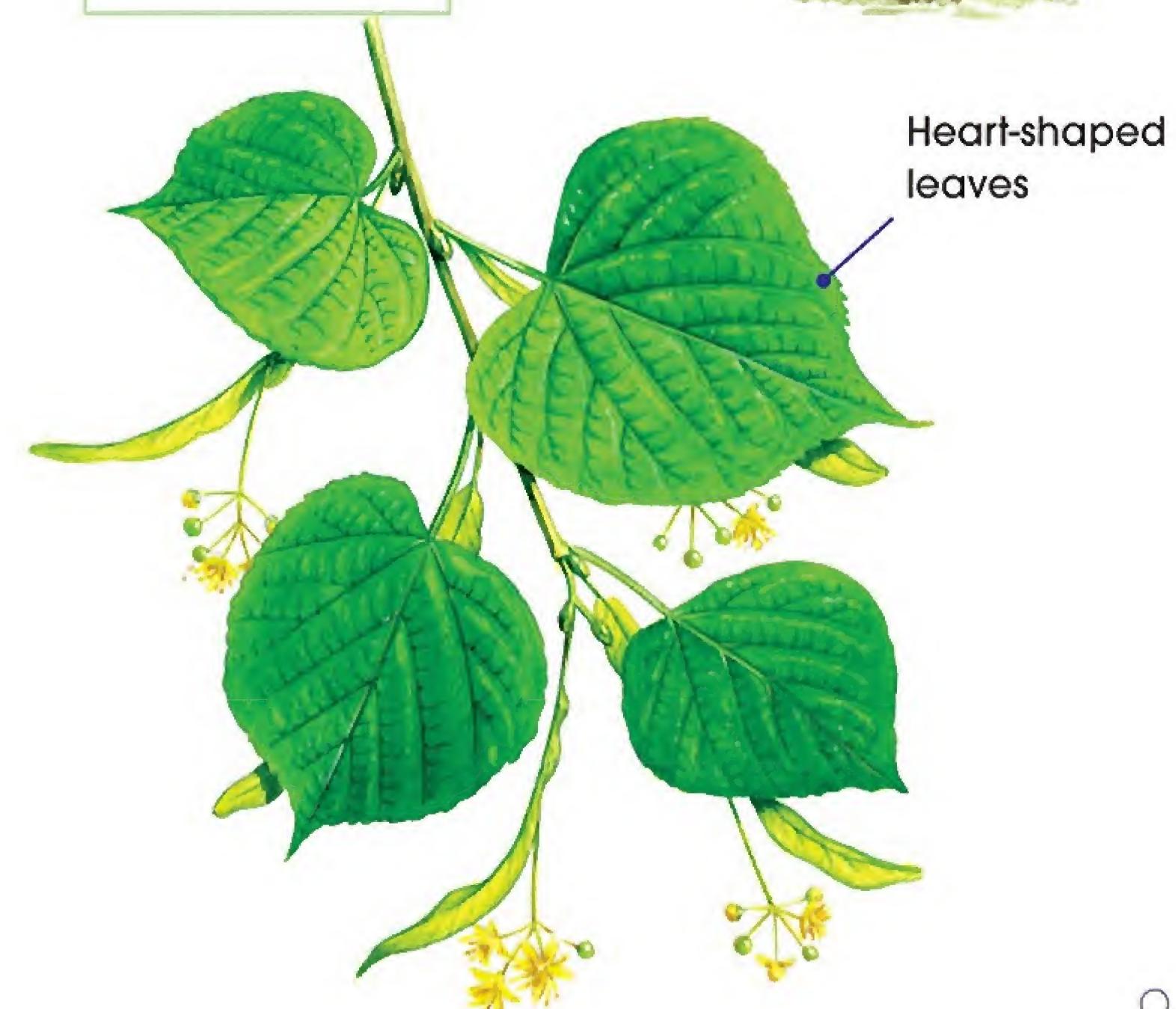
The leaves of this tree flutter in the breeze. If you get close, it sounds like they are whispering.



Lime

The leaves of this tree look like little hearts. Limes flower in July. Bees love drinking their nectar.

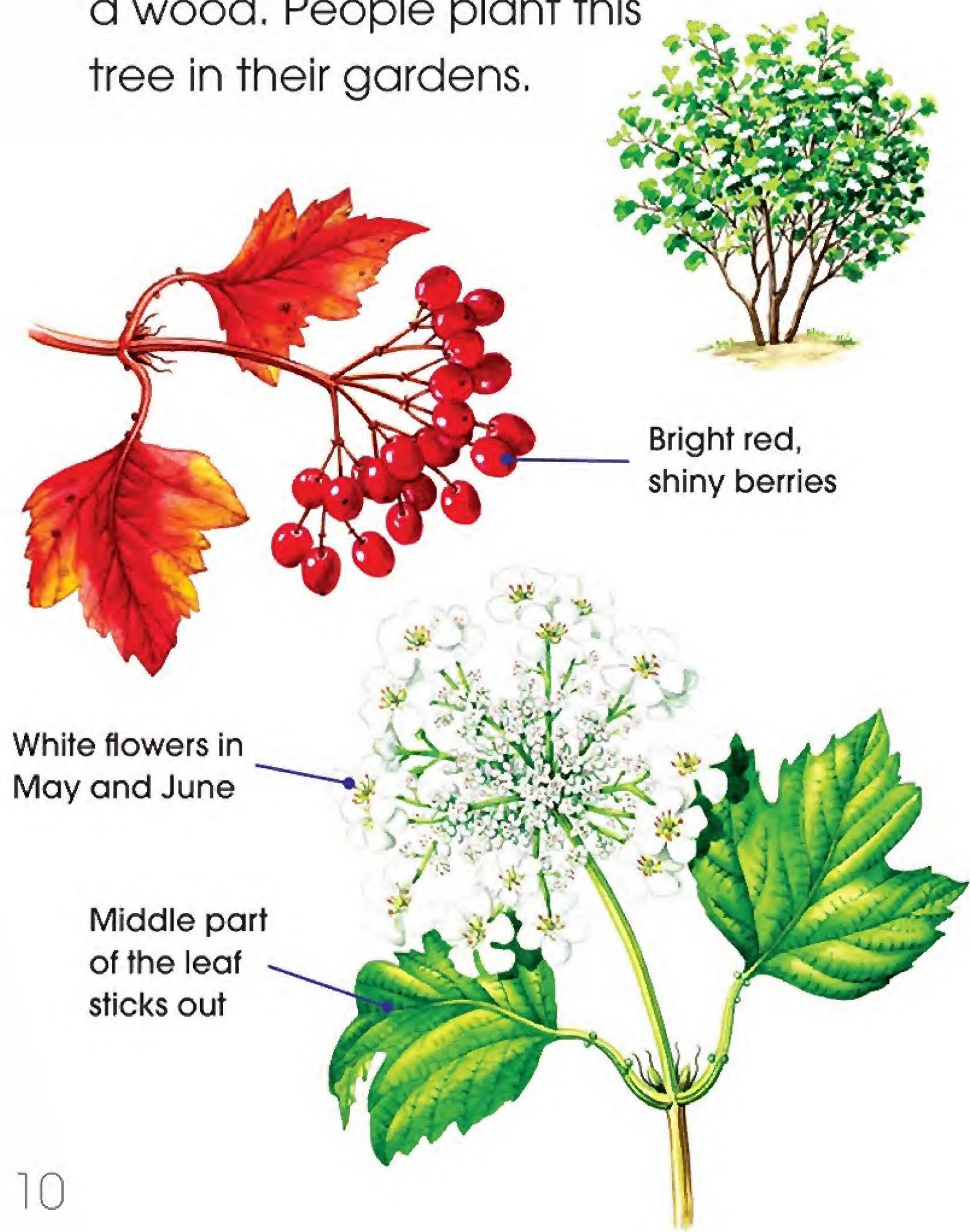
The limes we eat don't come from these lime trees!





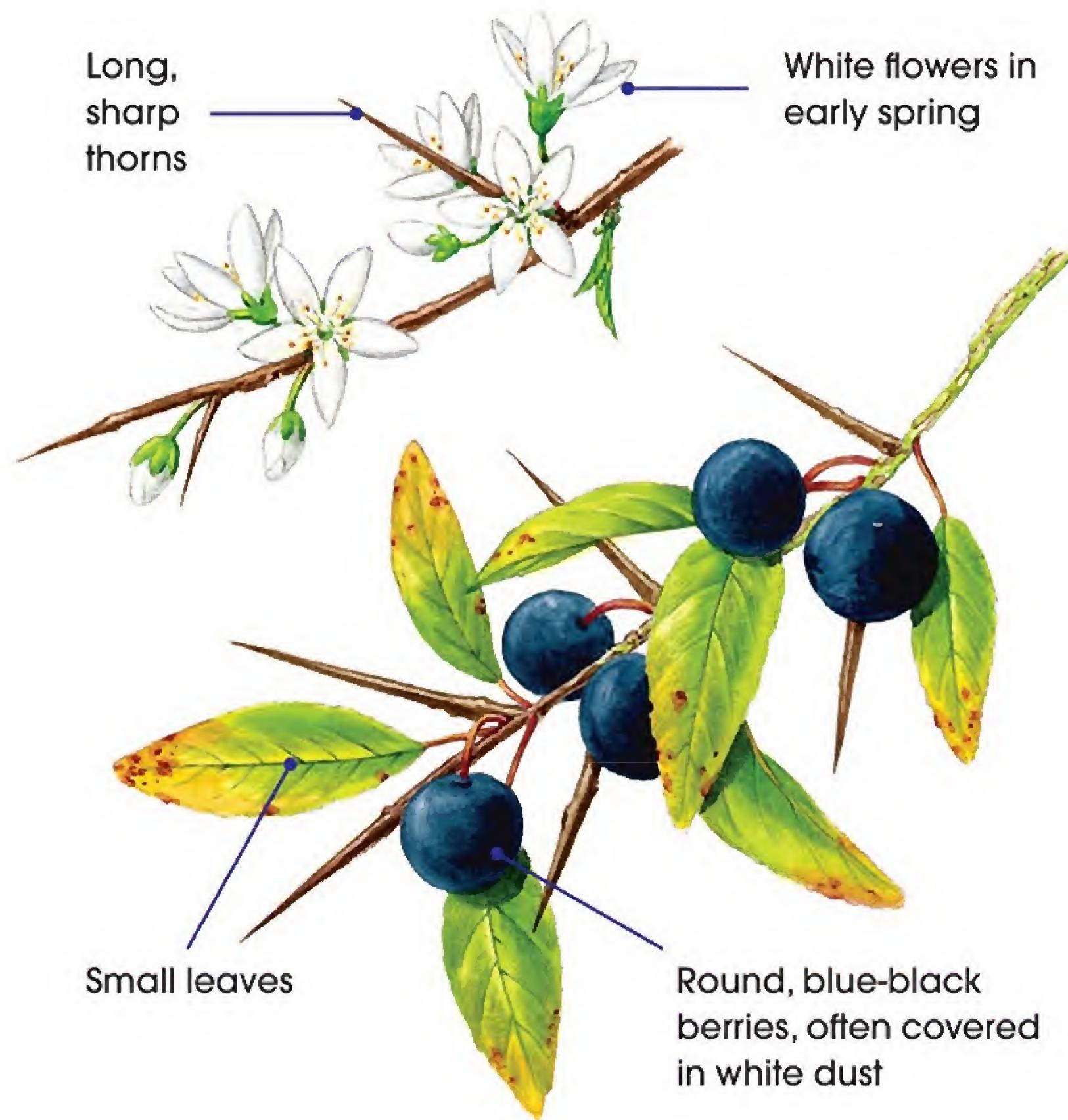
Guelder rose

The guelder rose has pretty leaves, flowers and berries. In the wild, it usually grows in damp parts of a wood. People plant this tree in their gardens.



Blackthorn

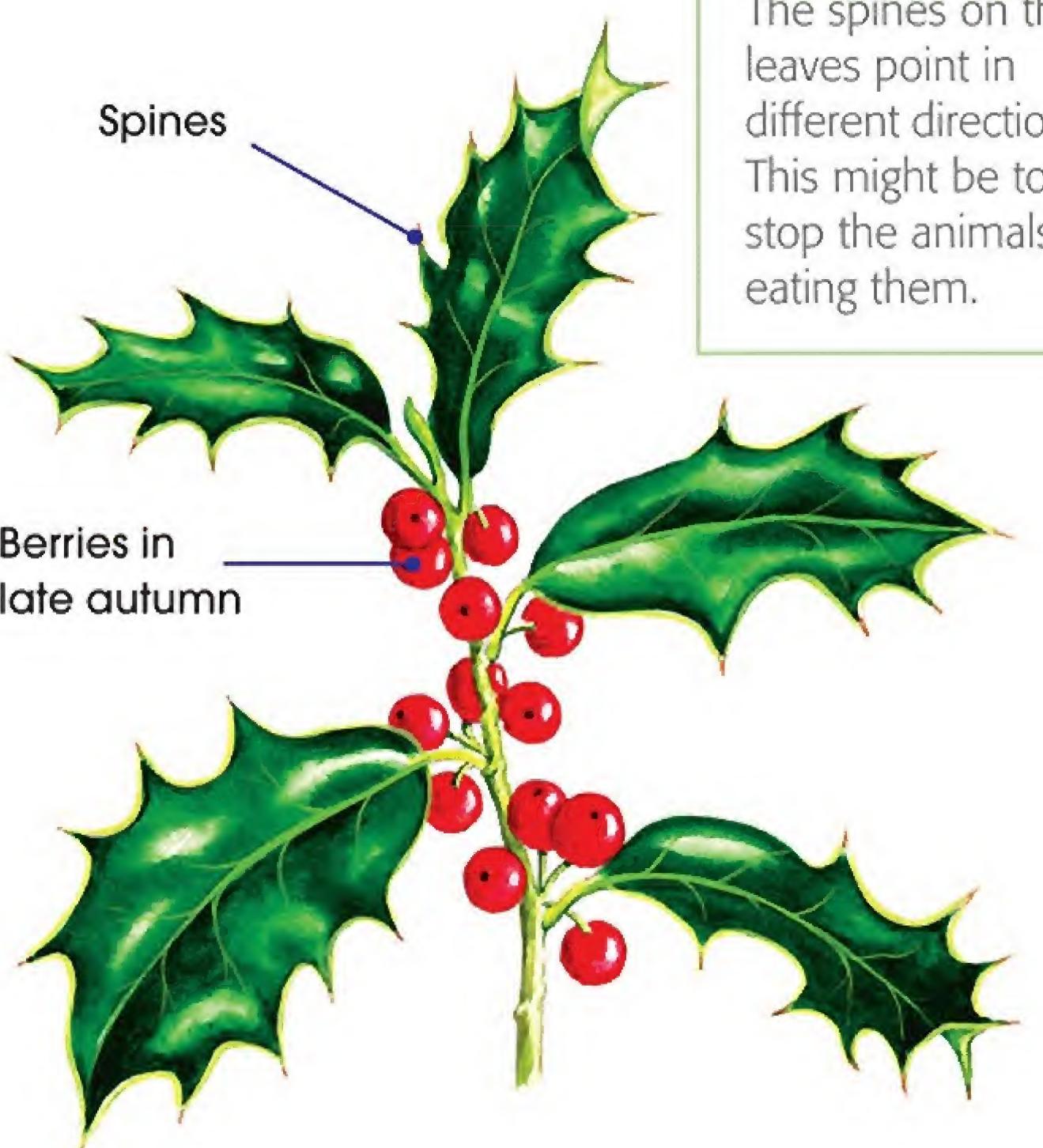
This is a very prickly bush – watch out! Look for it growing in hedges. The fruits are called sloes. They taste very sour.





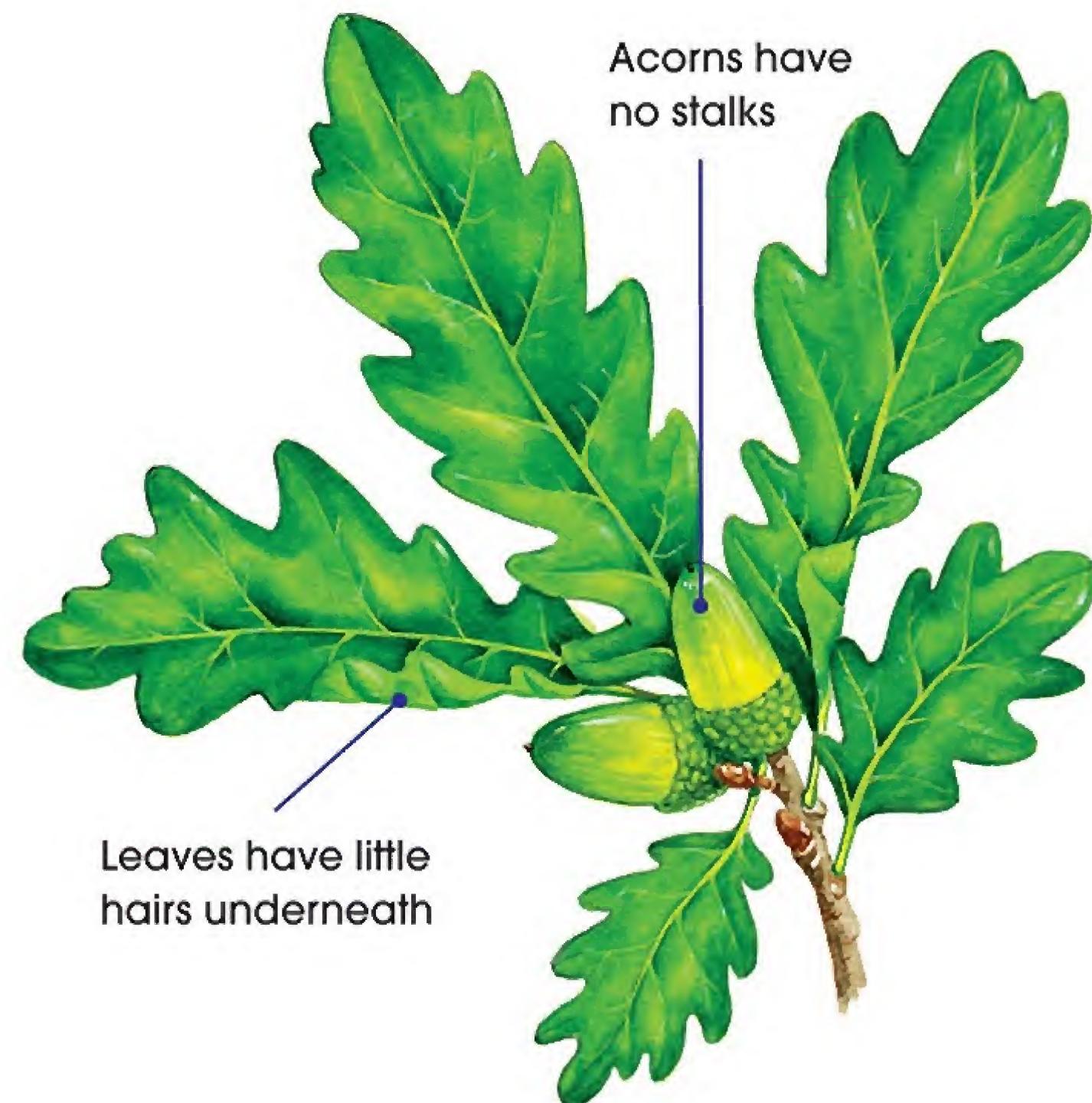
Holly

These prickly trees have red berries. You will often see them at Christmas on cards or decorations. Holly leaves stay on the tree all year round.



Sessile oak

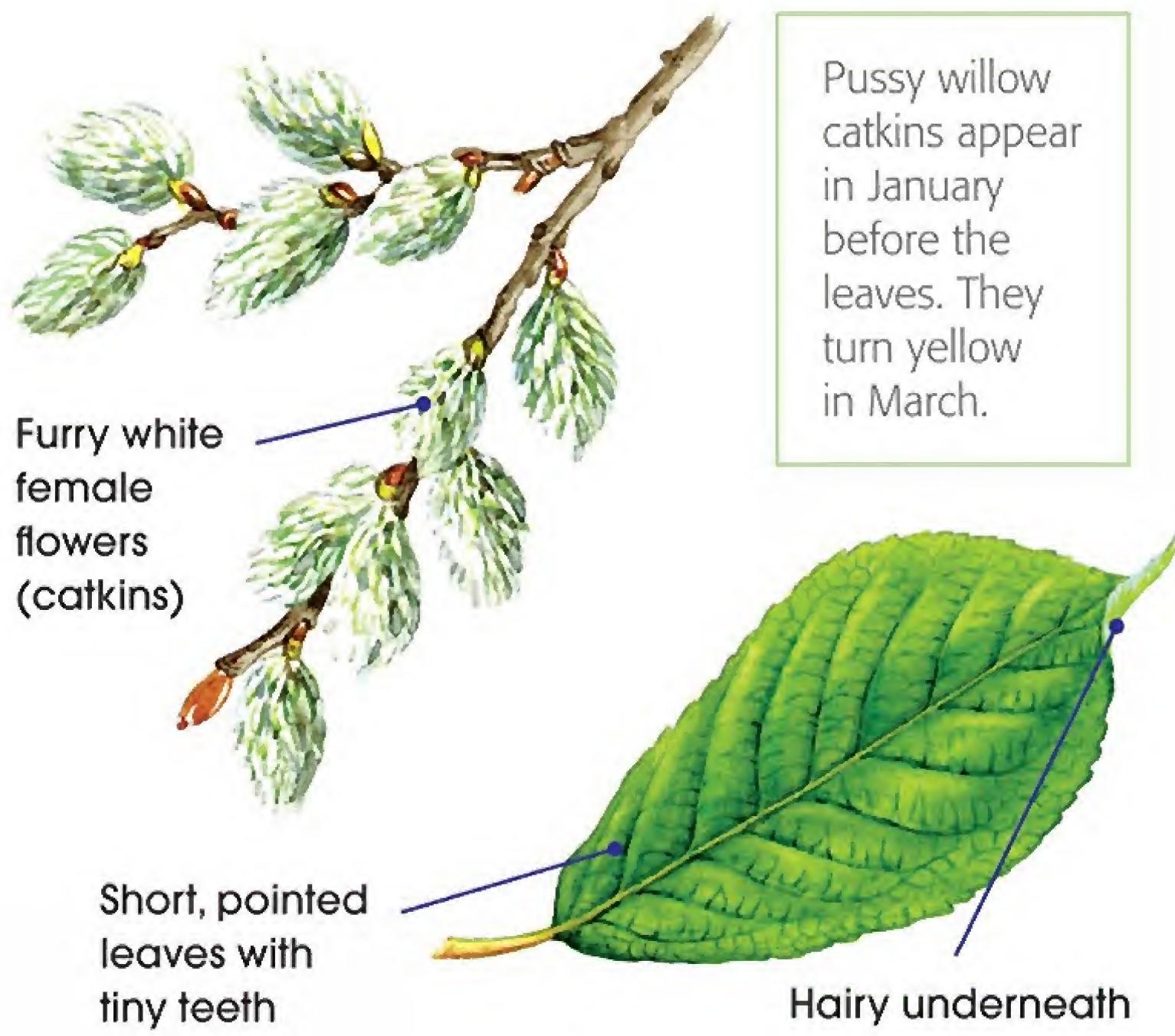
The word sessile means without a stalk. The acorns on these trees grow straight out of the twig. Acorns on common oak trees grow on stalks.





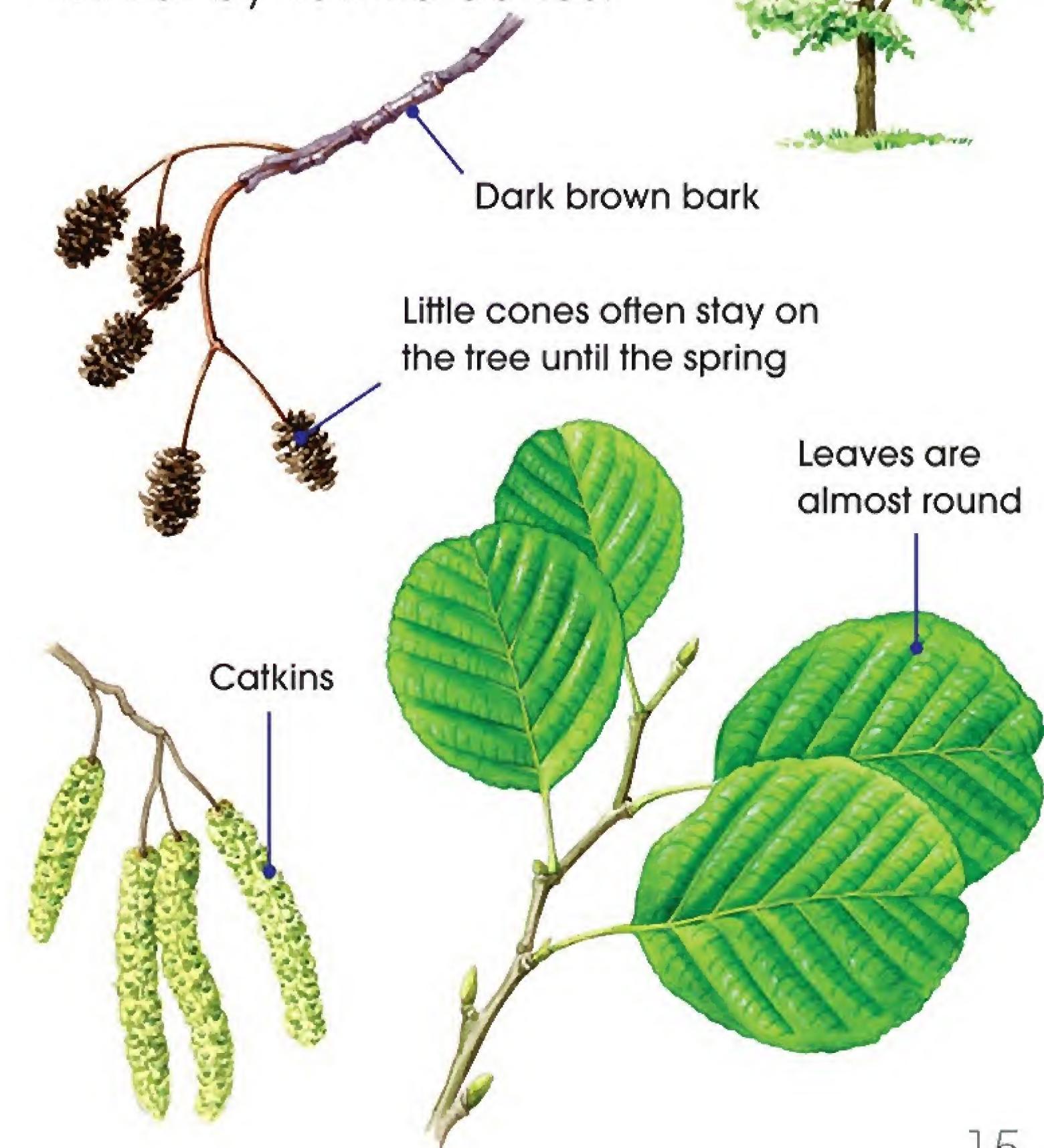
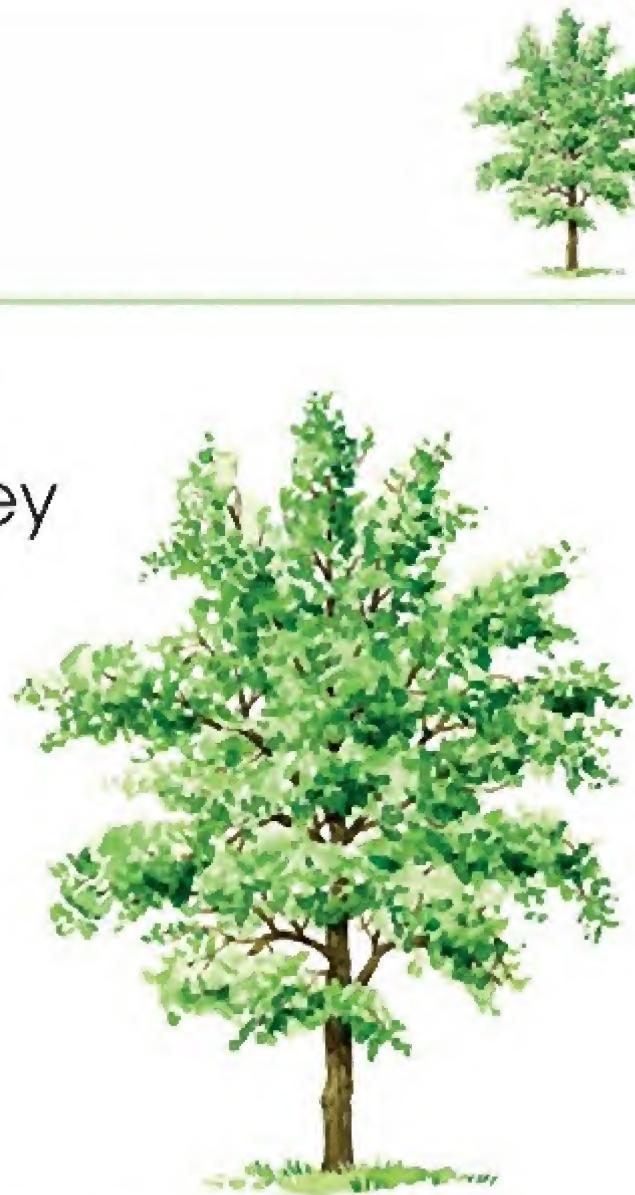
Sallow

Another name for this small tree is pussy willow. If you stroke the grey catkins, they feel as soft as a cat's fur. Goldfinches use the fluffy seeds to give their nests a soft lining.



Alder

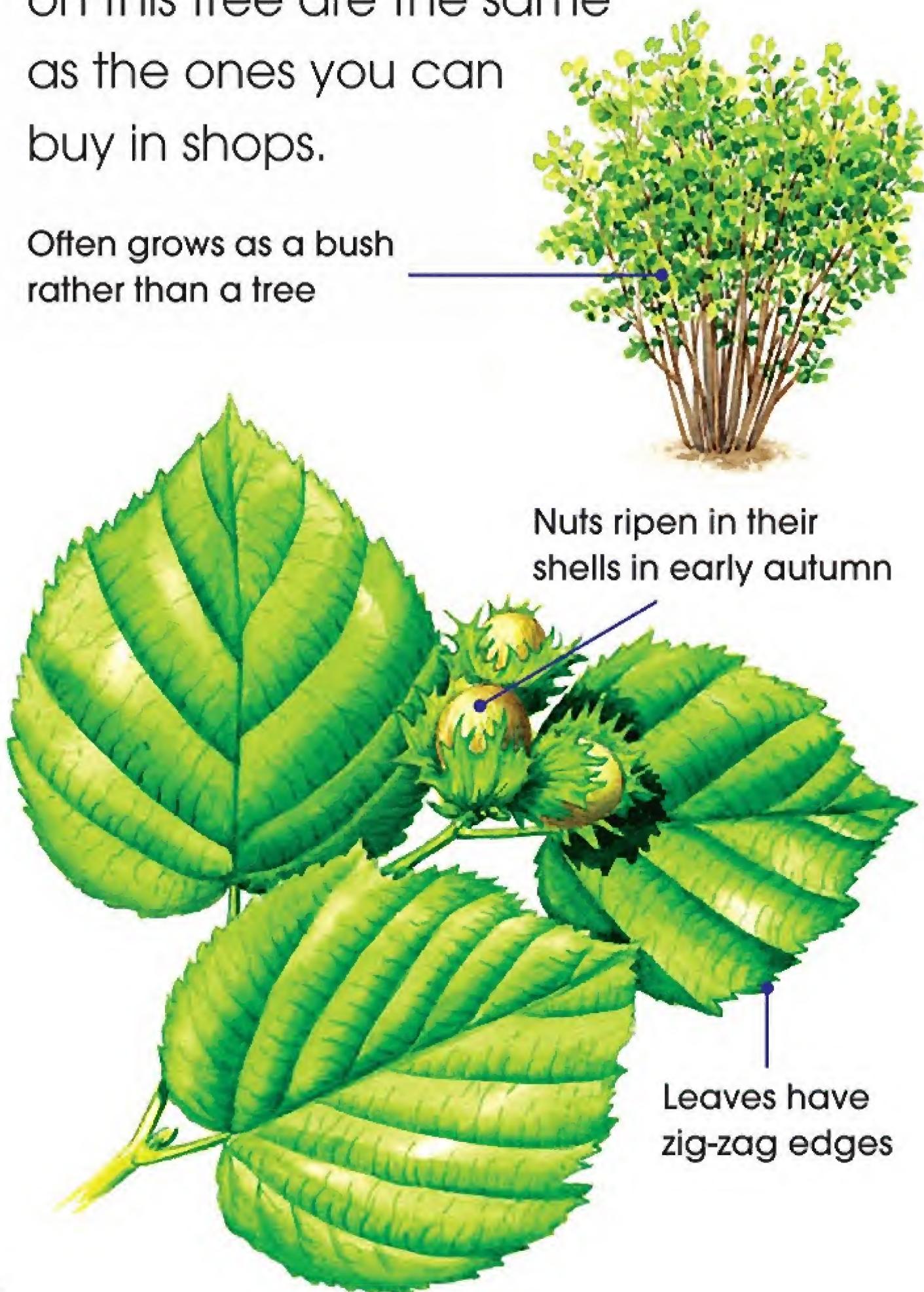
Look for alder trees next to streams and rivers. They don't mind having their roots under water! You can spot this tree in winter by its little cones.





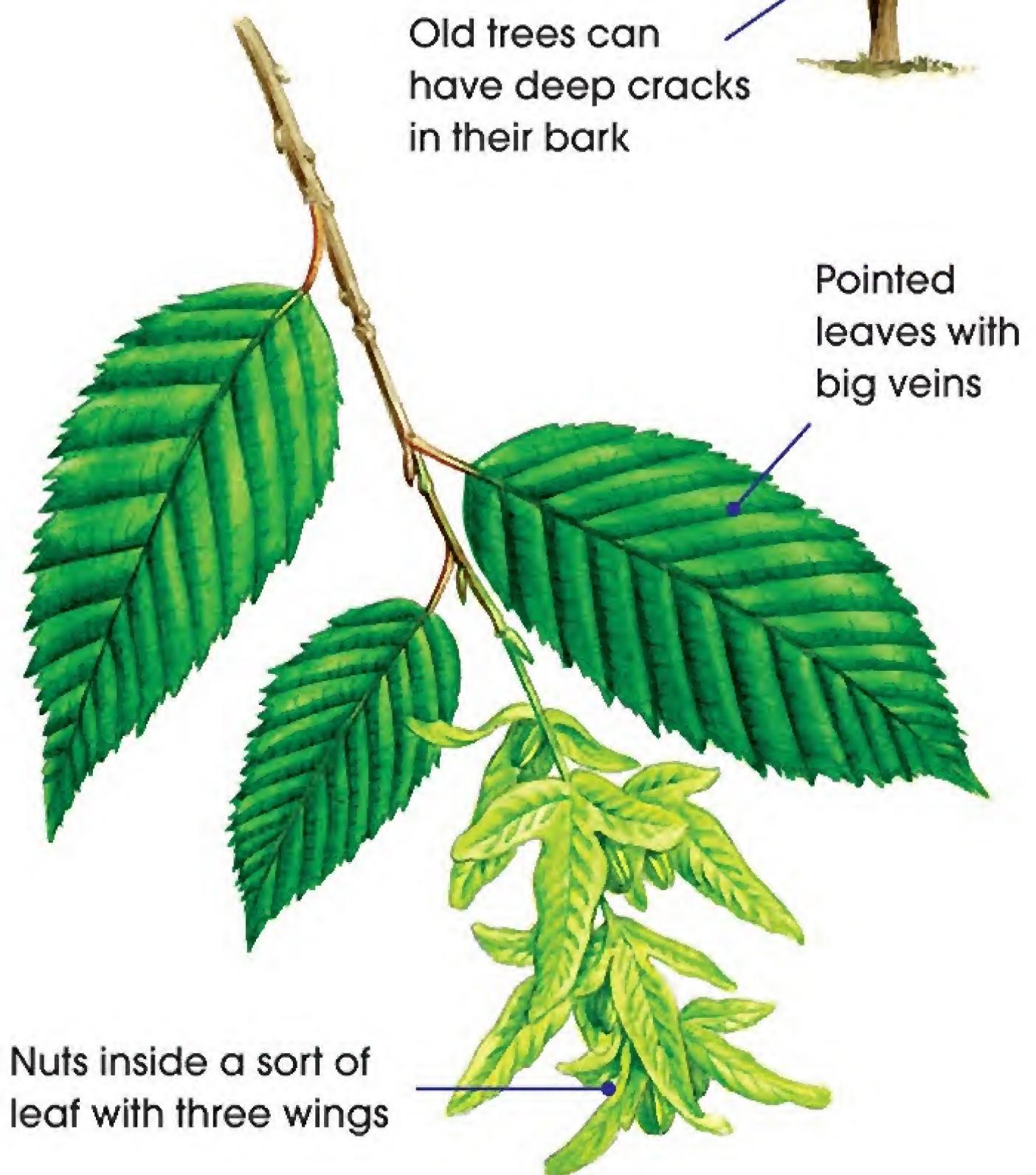
Hazel

Pigeons, jays, squirrels and mice all want to eat the fruit of the hazel tree. And so do we! The hazelnuts on this tree are the same as the ones you can buy in shops.



Hornbeam

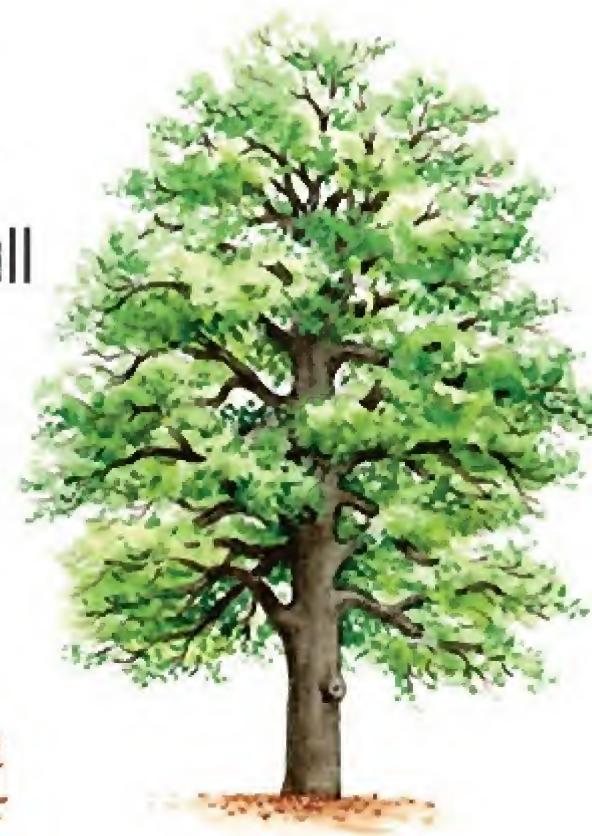
The name hornbeam comes from two words meaning hard tree. Its wood is very strong. In autumn, its leaves turn orange and yellow.





Beech

You will often find lots of these trees growing together. They have tall trunks and the leaves and branches grow from a long way up.



Wood mice feed on beech nuts in the winter.



Small triangular nuts drop from spiny cases in autumn



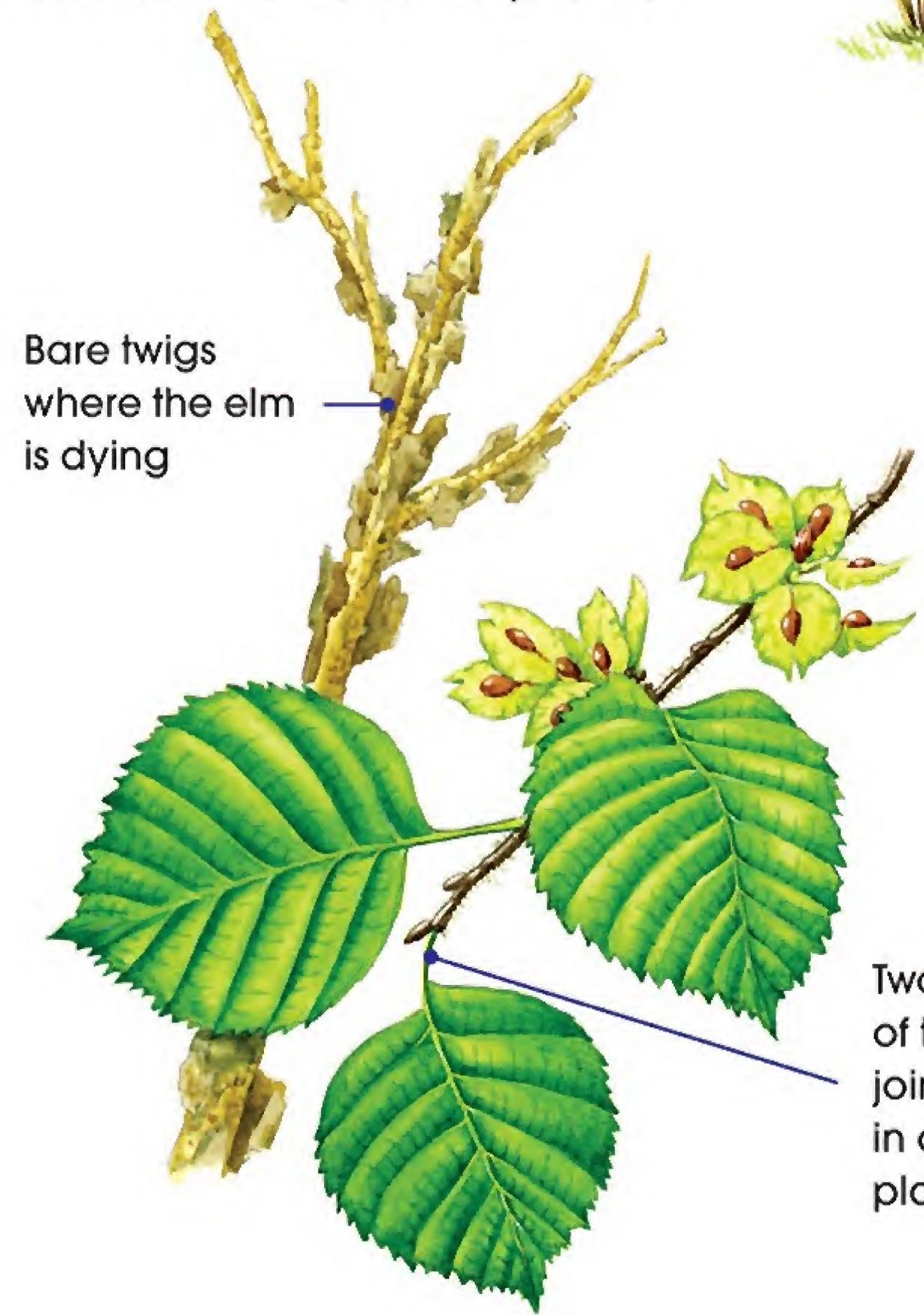
Round mark where a branch fell off a long time ago



Wavy-edged, smooth leaves

English elm

This tree does not grow much bigger than a bush. Before it dies, it sends out underground suckers. New elm trees sprout from the suckers to take its place.



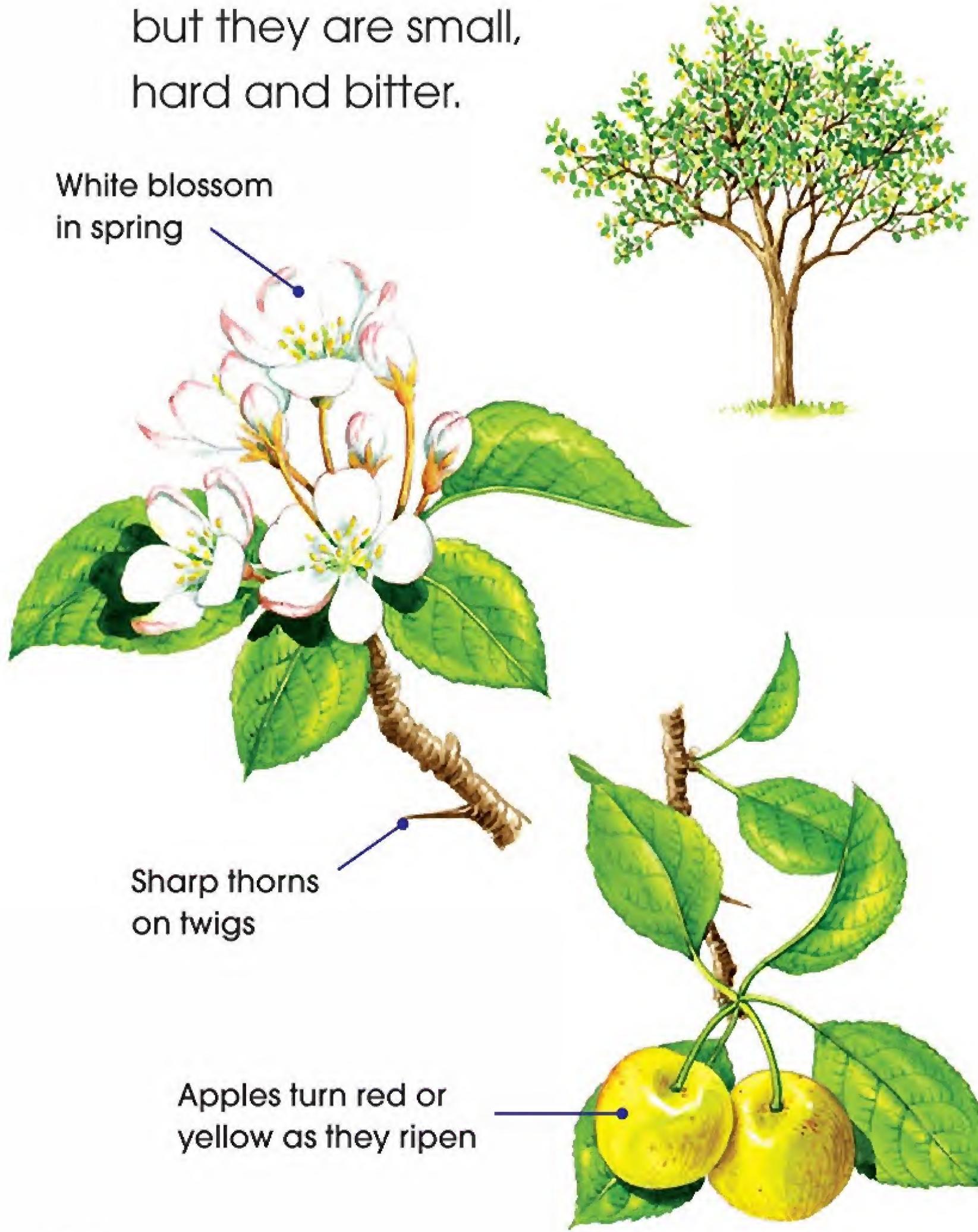
Bare twigs where the elm is dying

Two sides of the leaf join the stem in different places.



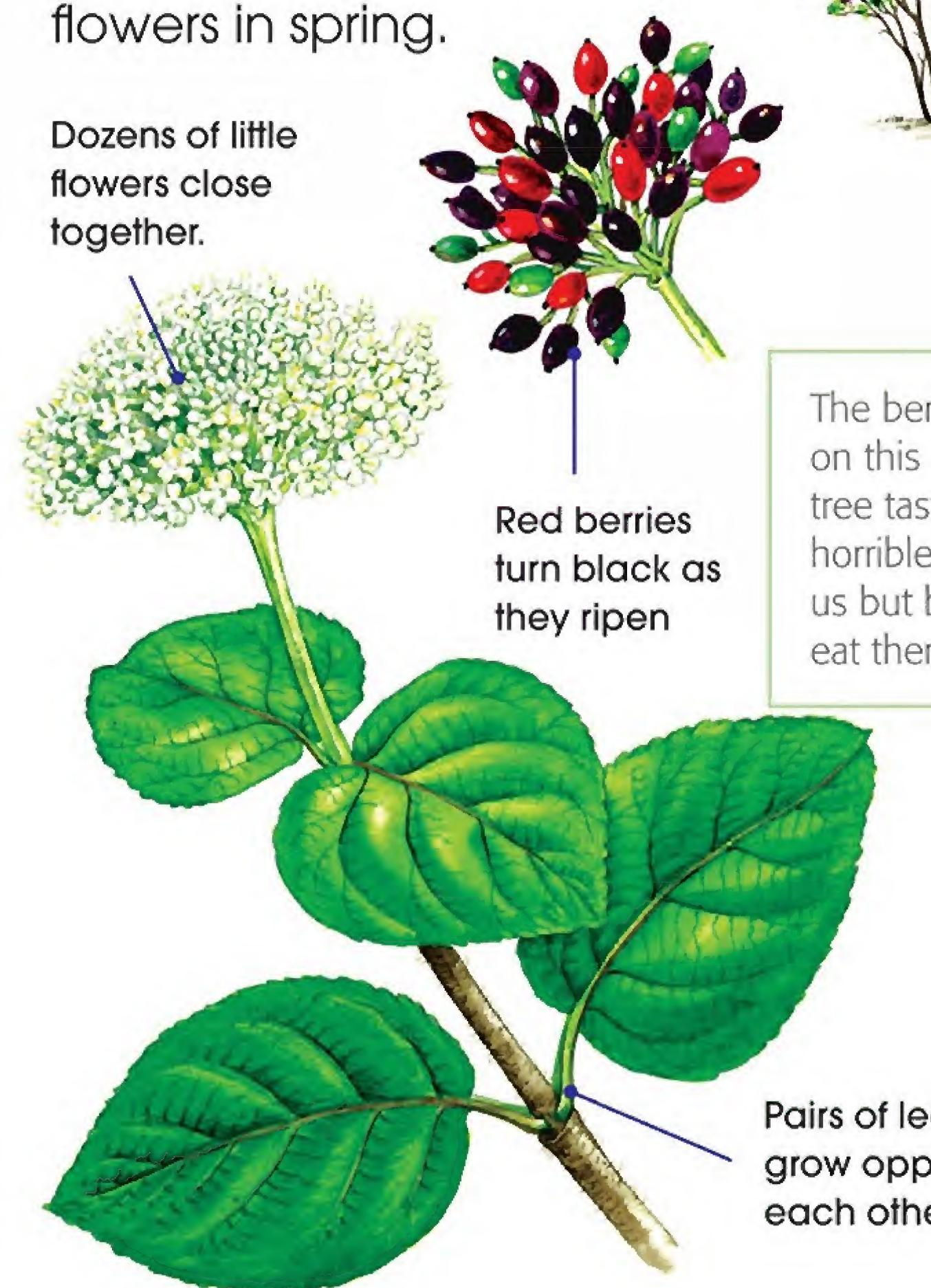
Crab apple

This is the oldest apple tree.
We can eat the apples,
but they are small,
hard and bitter.



Wayfaring tree

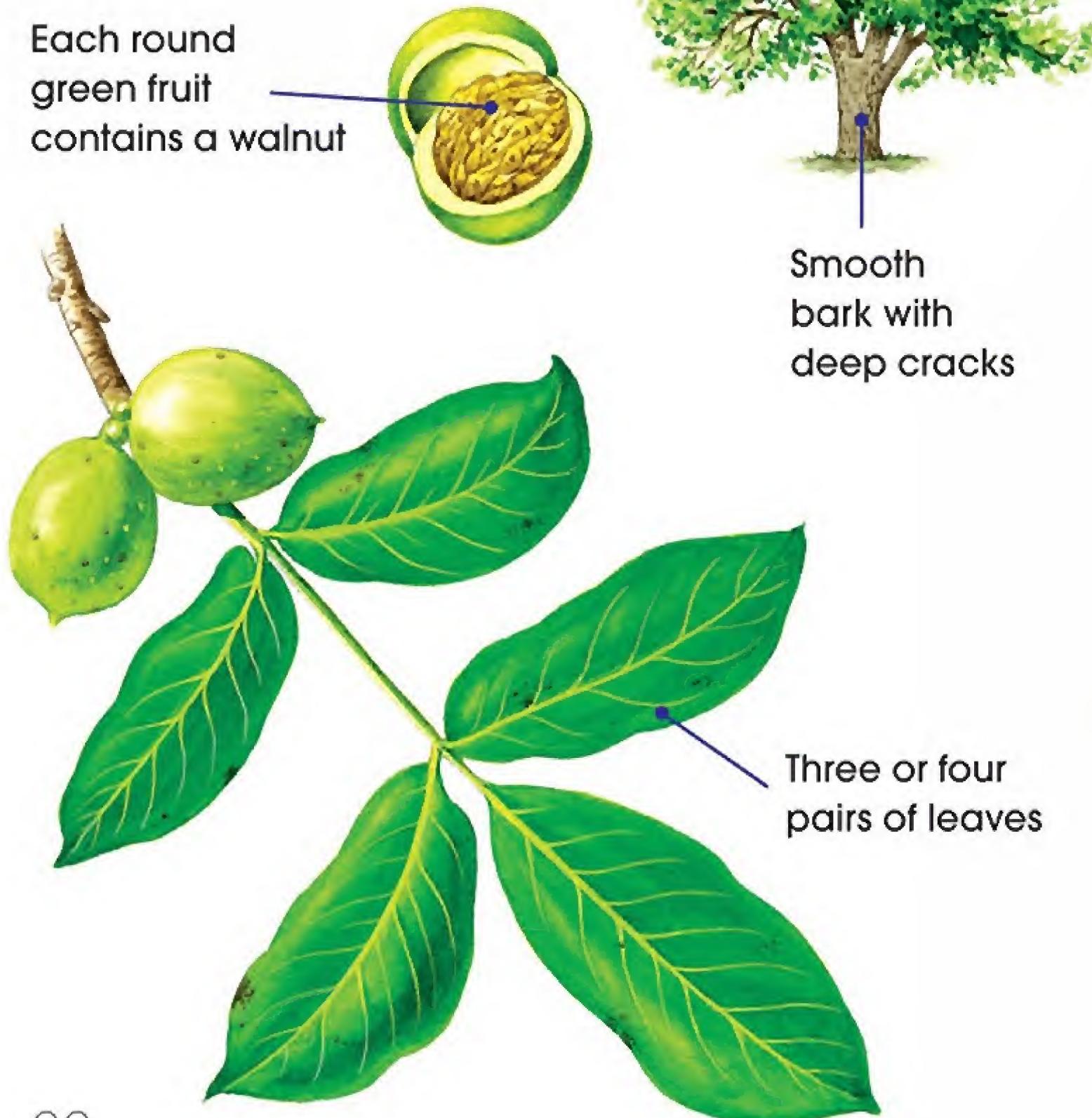
You will usually find these little trees in hedges and at the edges of woods.
Look for their white flowers in spring.





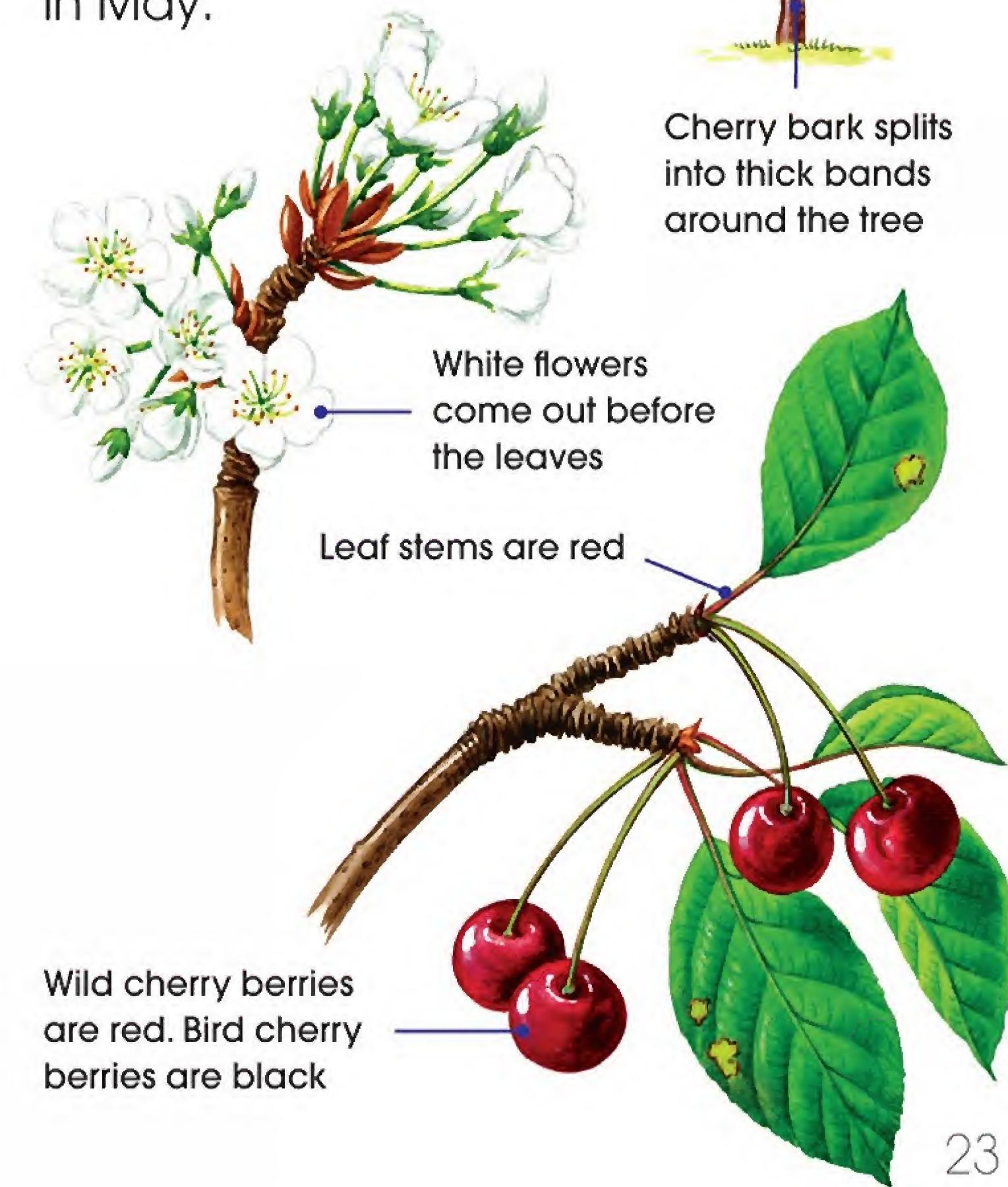
Walnut

The crinkly nuts that we buy from shops come from the walnut tree. This tree was brought to this country a long time ago and now some grow in the wild.



Cherry

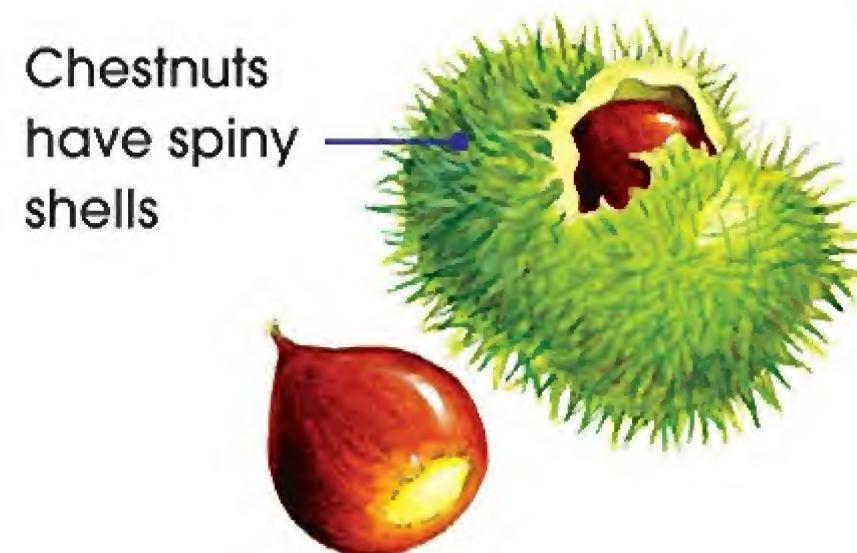
Look for white cherry blossom in spring. Wild cherry trees flower in April. Bird cherry trees flower in May.





Sweet chestnut

The Romans brought the sweet chestnut to Britain. But they did not realise it would be too cold here for this tree. That is why our chestnuts do not grow very big.



Willow

Willow trees have long, thin leaves and live in wet places. When they are old, their trunks often crack open.

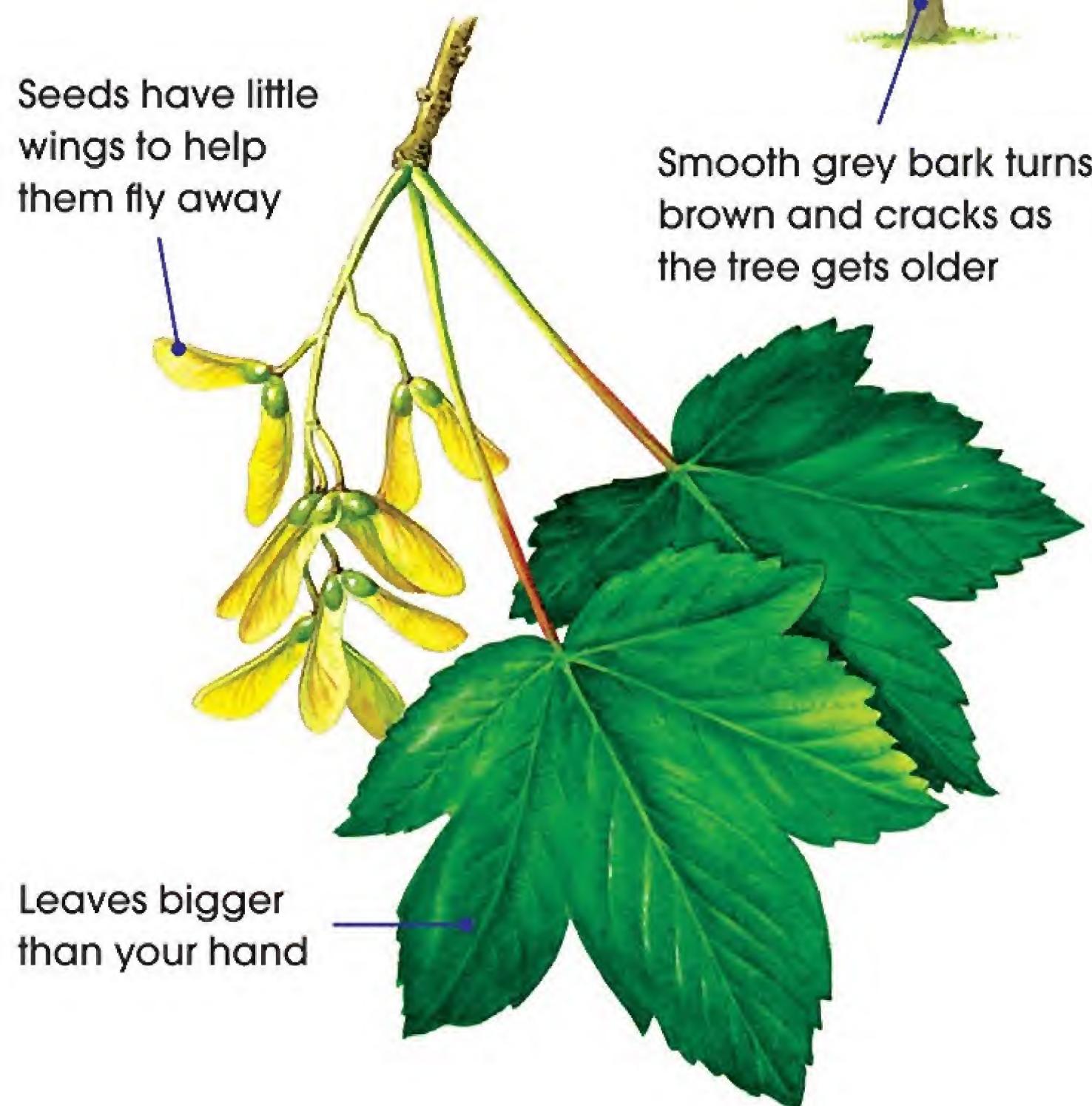


Willow branches are often cut at the top of the trunk. It makes the trees live longer. New branches will grow back.



Sycamore

This huge tree can be wider than it is tall. It produces lots of giant leaves and seeds. Sycamores were brought here from other countries.



Field maple

Look for the gold and yellow leaves of field maple in woods in autumn. All of the trees in the maple family have lovely autumn colours.



Small, round-headed tree



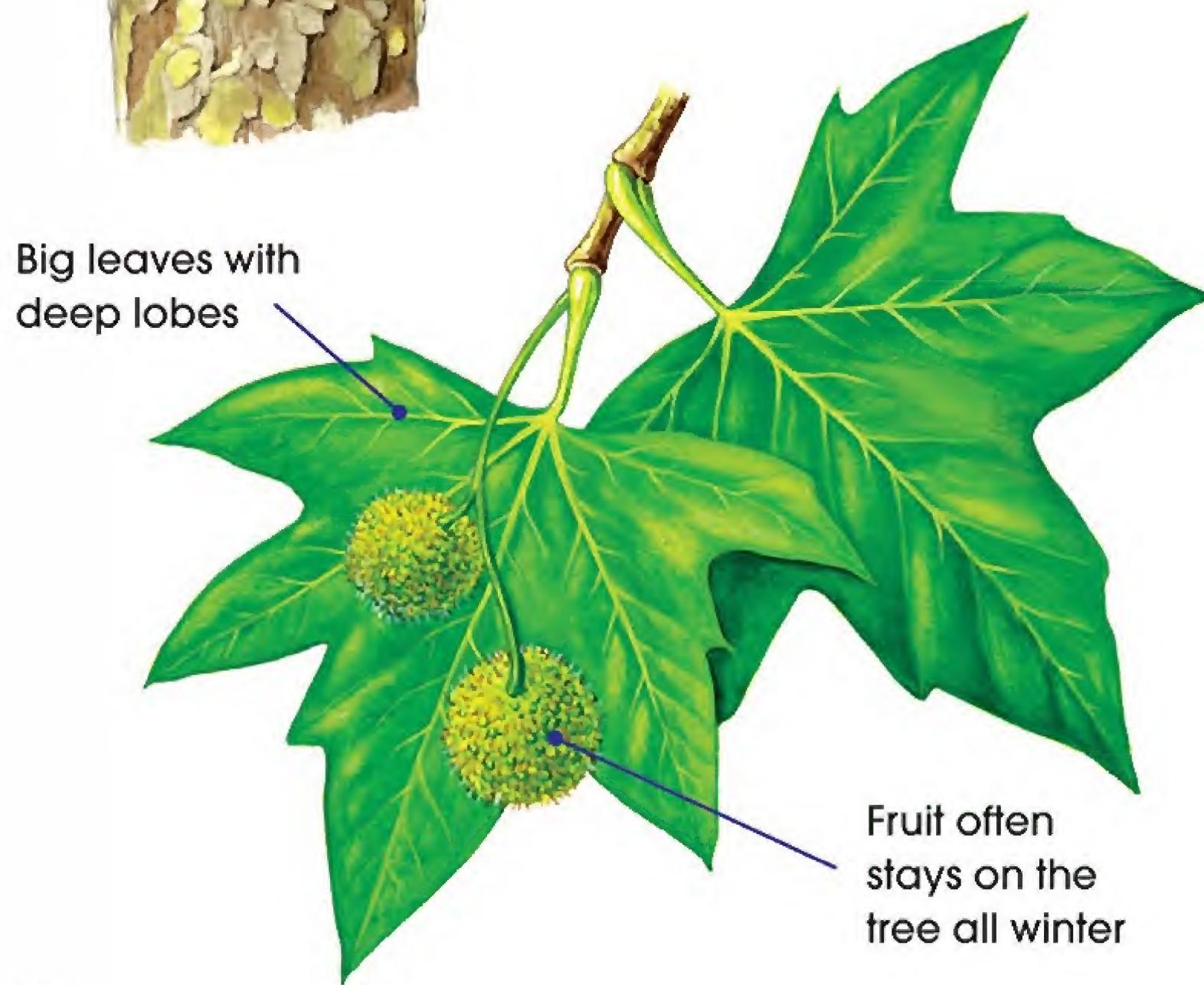


London plane

This tall tree is found in London's streets and squares, and in other towns and cities too. Look for the patchy bark on the trunk.

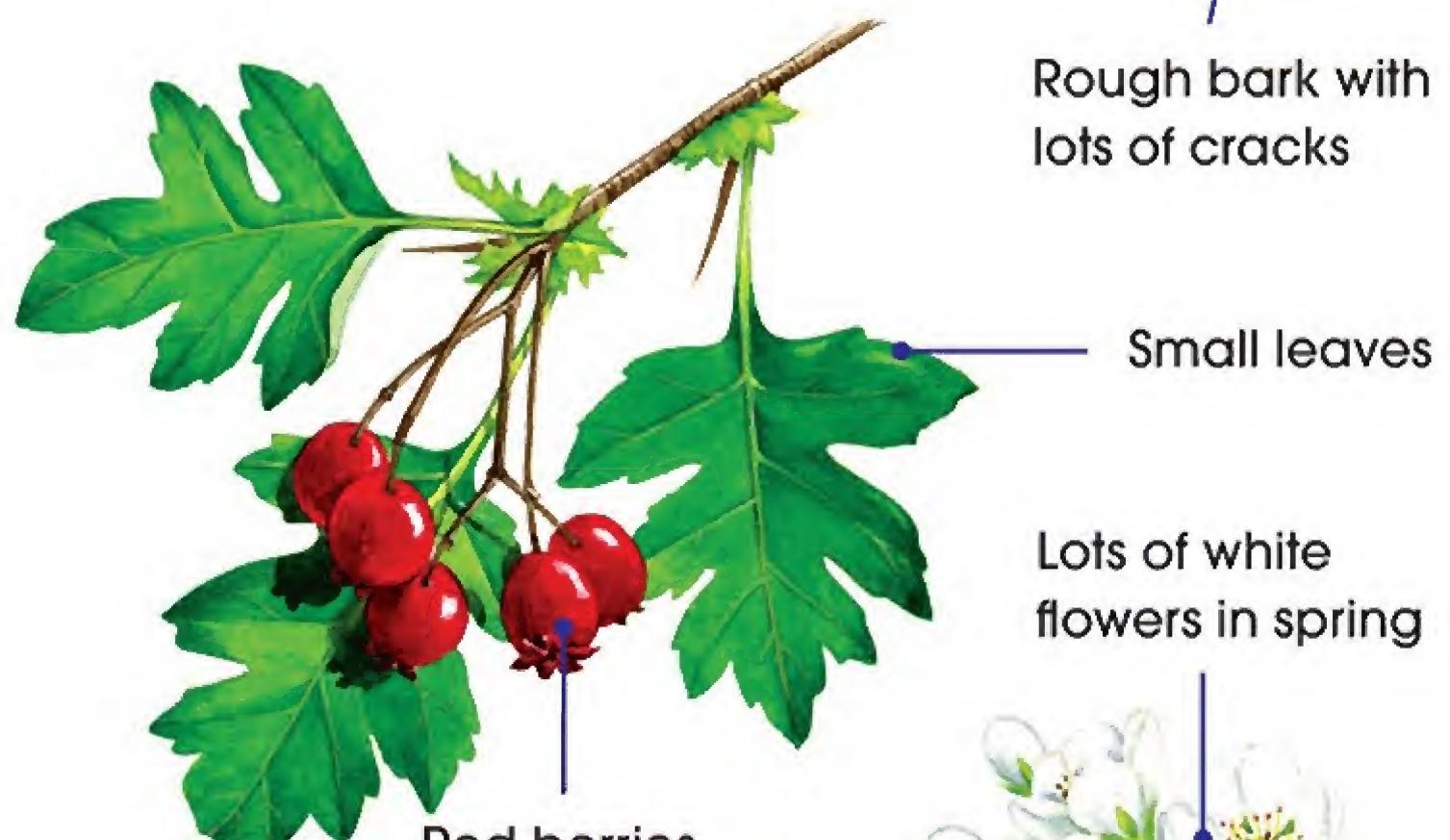


Bark with yellow and brown patches

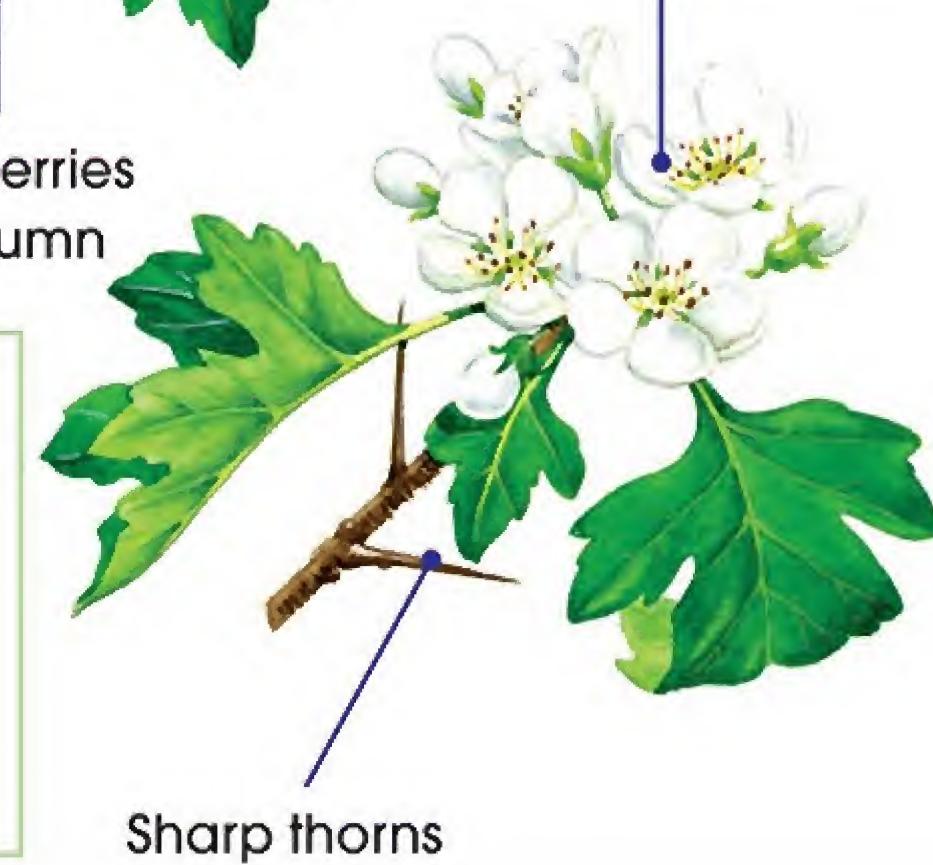


Hawthorn

Prickly hedges in the countryside are often made of hawthorn bushes. Hawthorn can also grow into a tree. They have white or pink flowers and red berries.



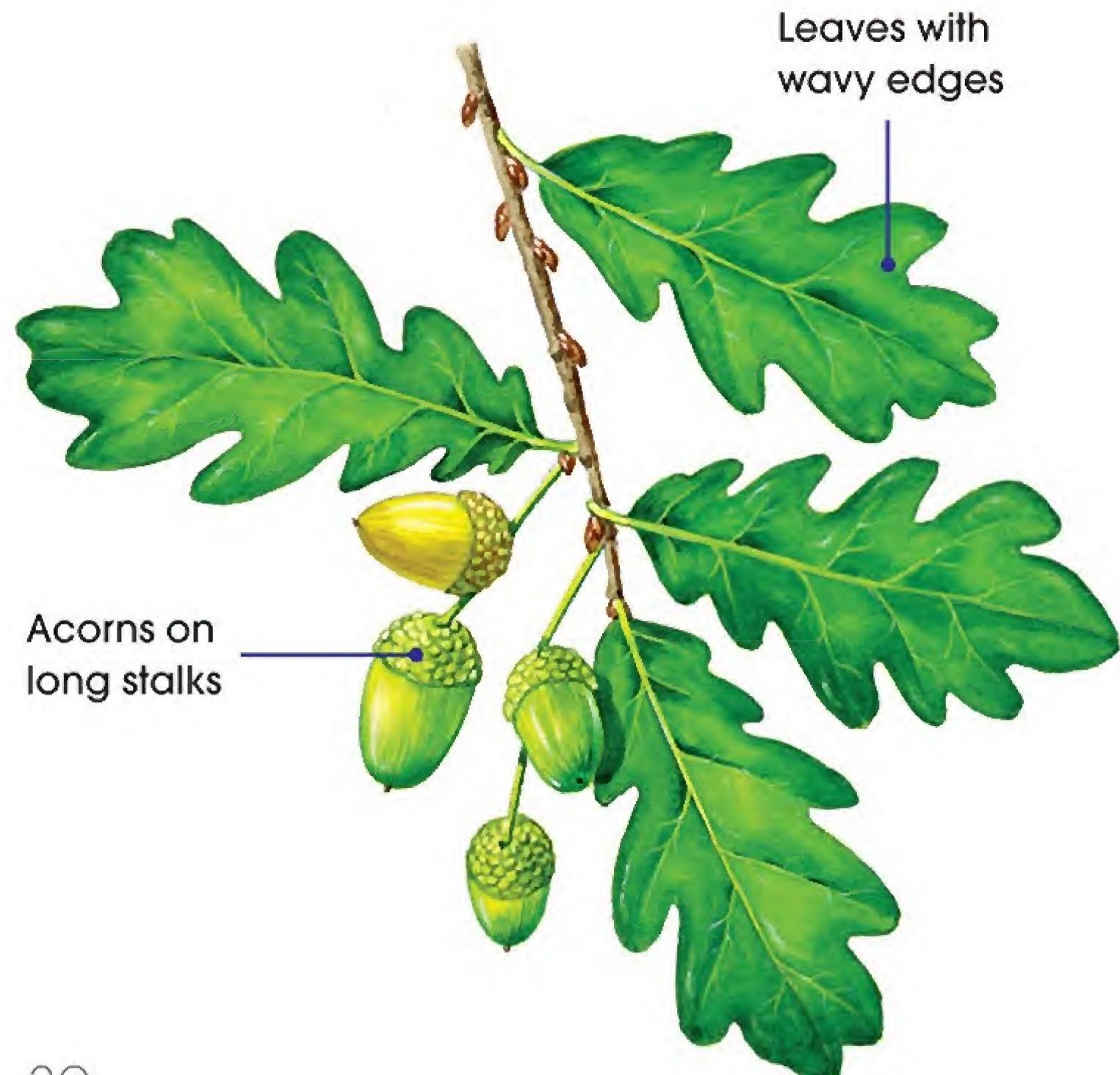
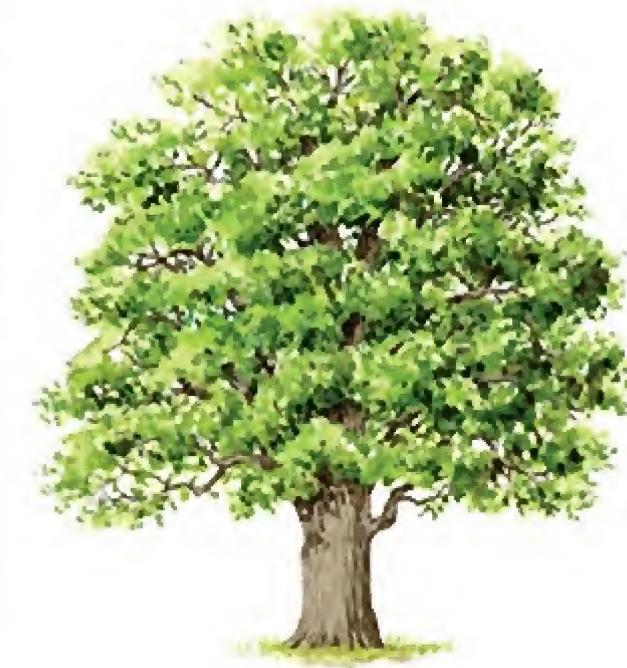
Hawthorn is sometimes called the May tree because its white flowers come out in that month.





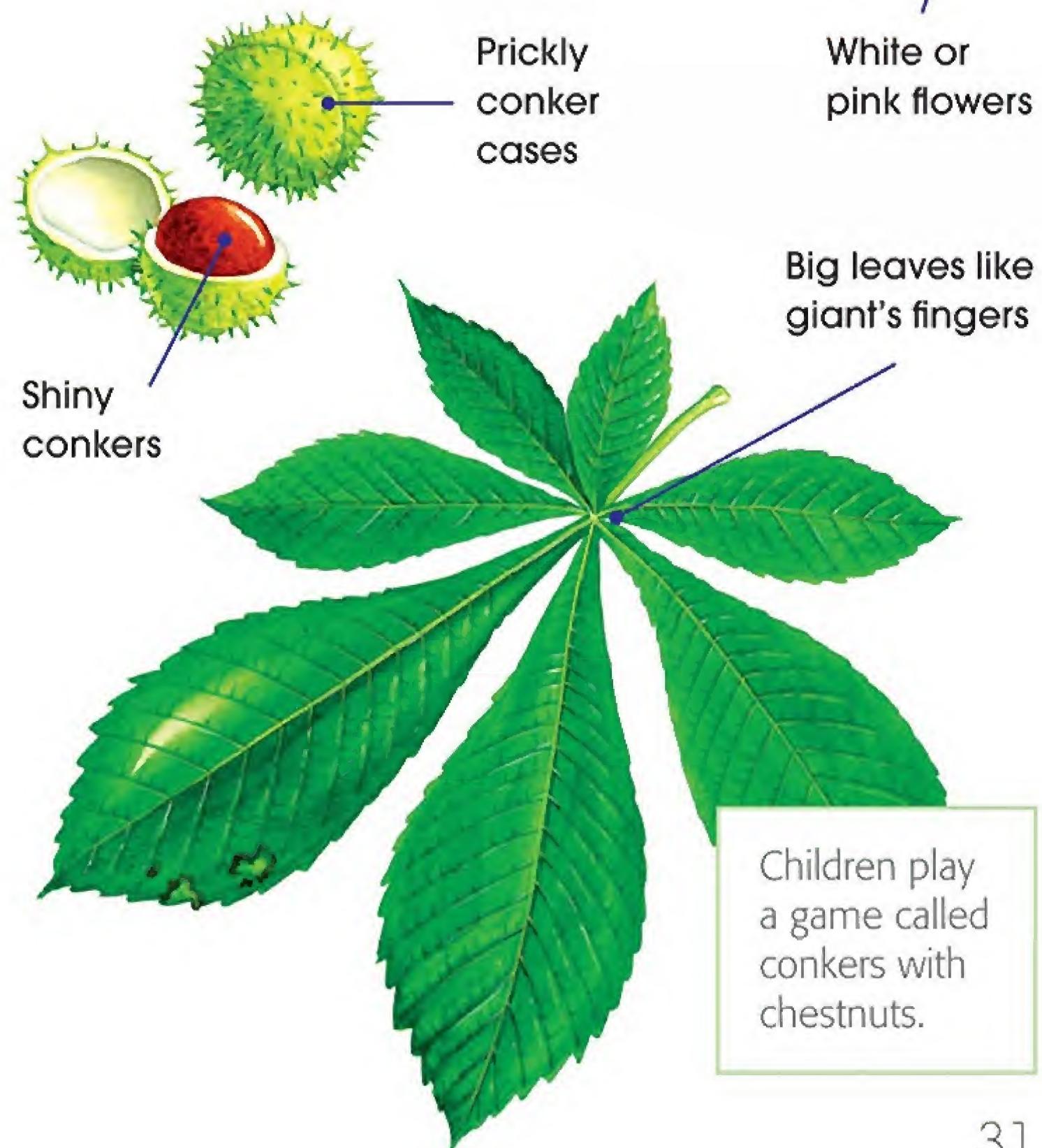
Common oak

Oak trees grow from little acorns into some of the biggest trees in the wood. They can have very thick trunks and live for hundreds of years.



Horse chestnut

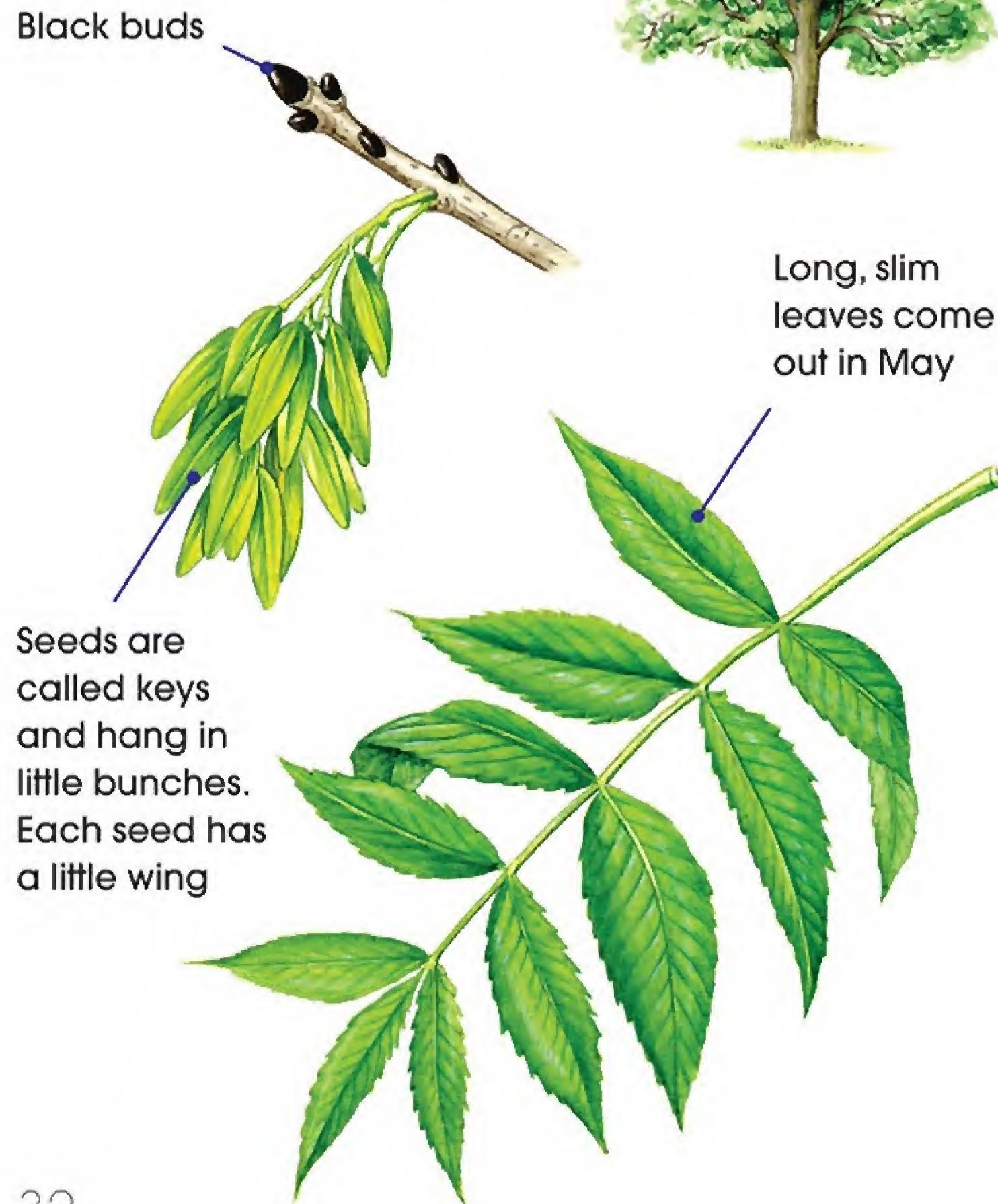
This is a very big tree. In spring, it has big flowers that stick up like white candles. In autumn, it has shiny nuts called conkers.





Ash

Ash is a very tall tree. In winter, look out for the black buds on the tips of its twigs.



Rowan

This tree is also called mountain ash. It grows higher up the hills than most other trees. People plant it in their gardens too.

Bright red berries in autumn



Smooth bark

Rowans used to be planted in gardens and churchyards to scare away witches!

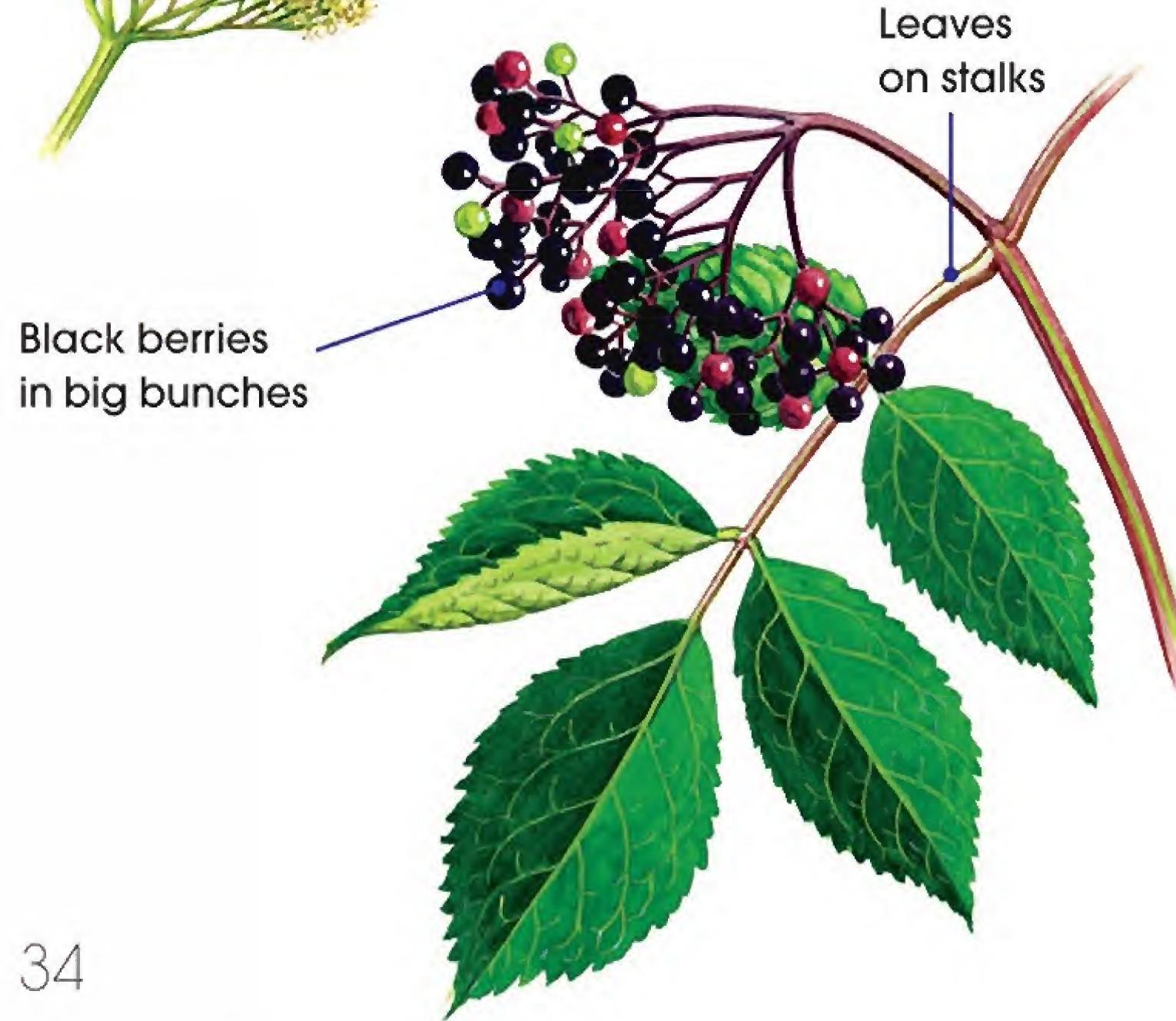


Elder

You will find elder in all sorts of places. Birds eat the berries and spread the seeds in their droppings. Most elders only grow as big as a bush.



White flowers in early summer have a fresh smell

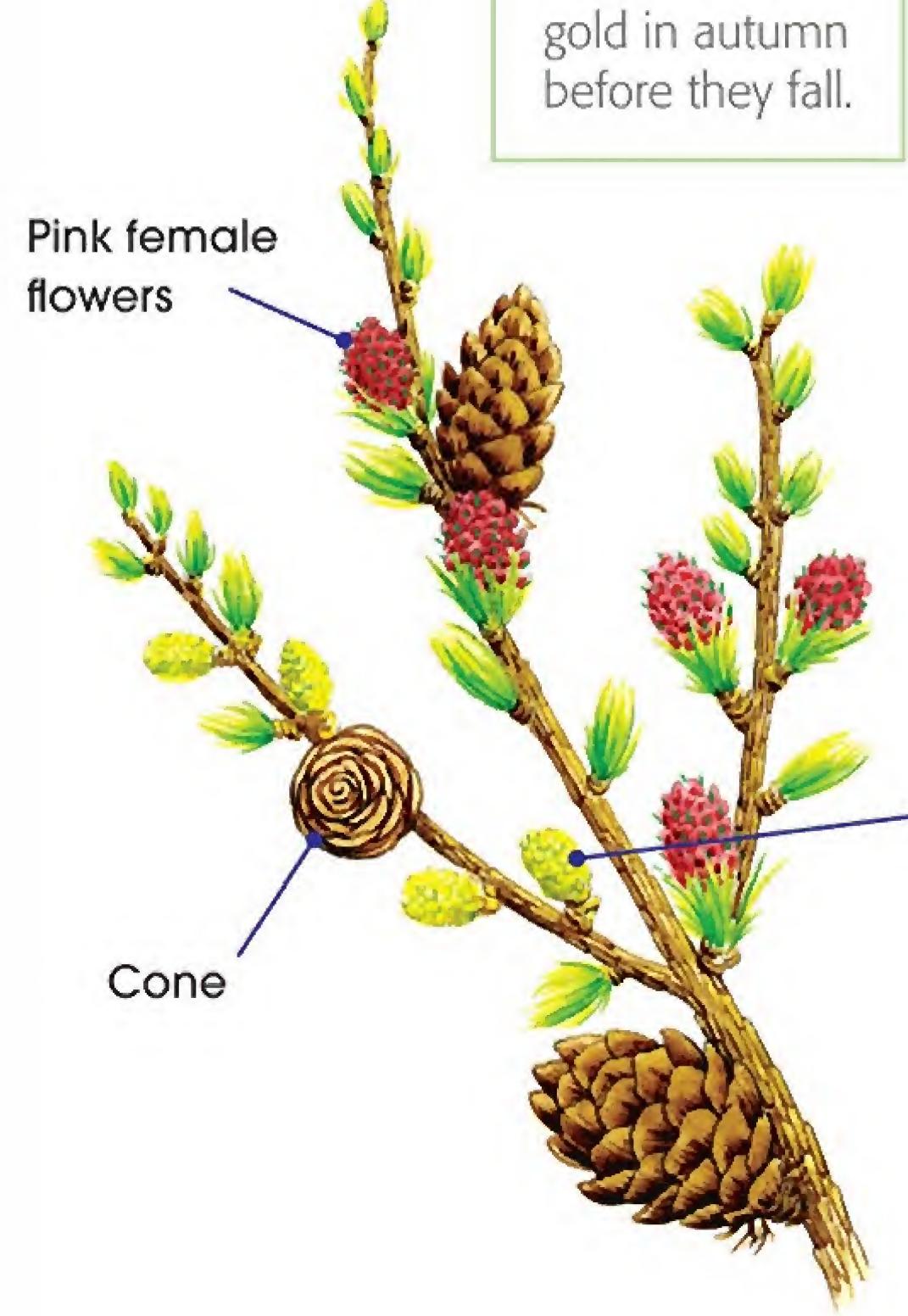


Larch

The larch has leaves that look like needles, just like other trees called conifers. But the larch is the only conifer that drops all of its leaves in winter.



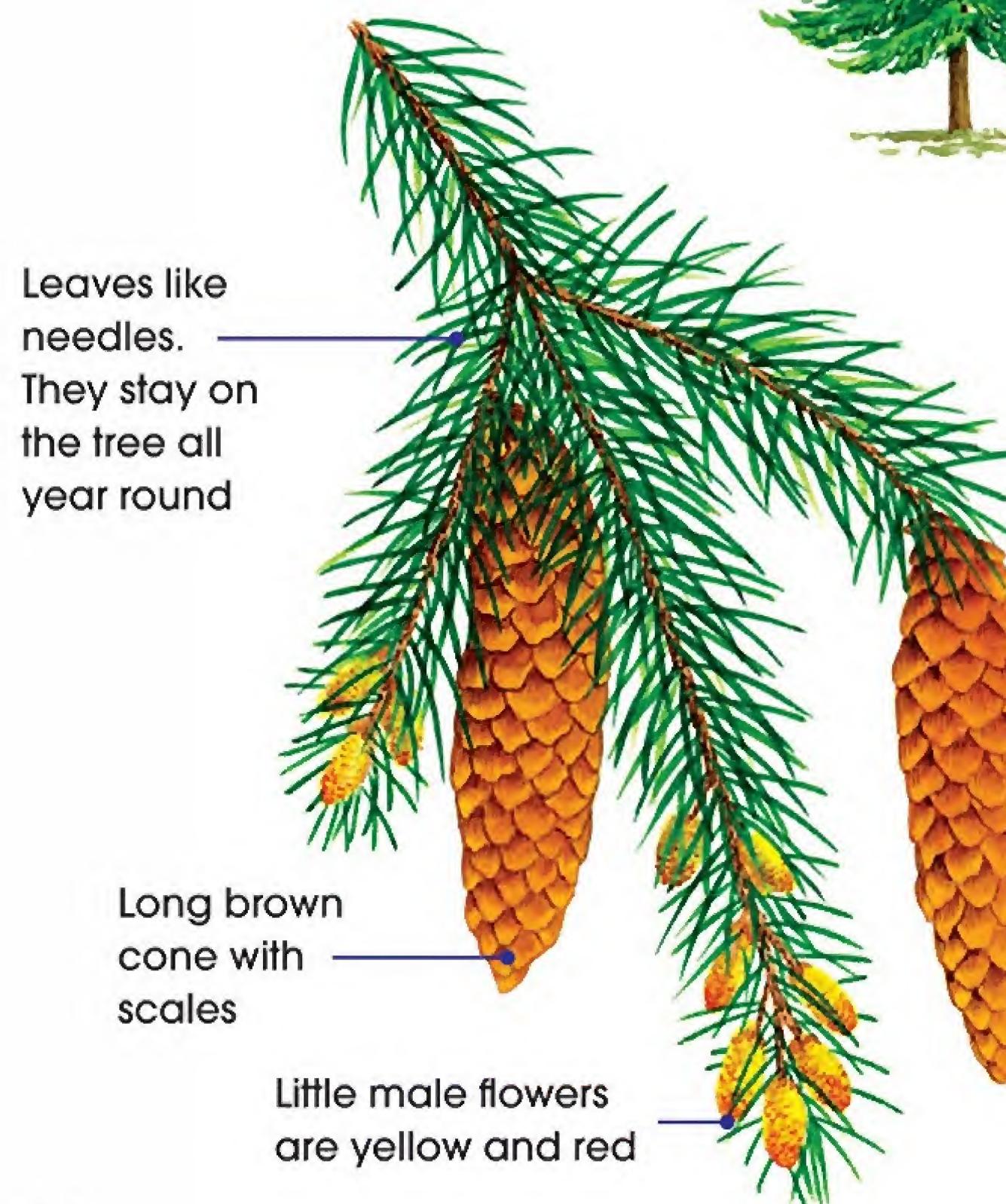
A larch in winter





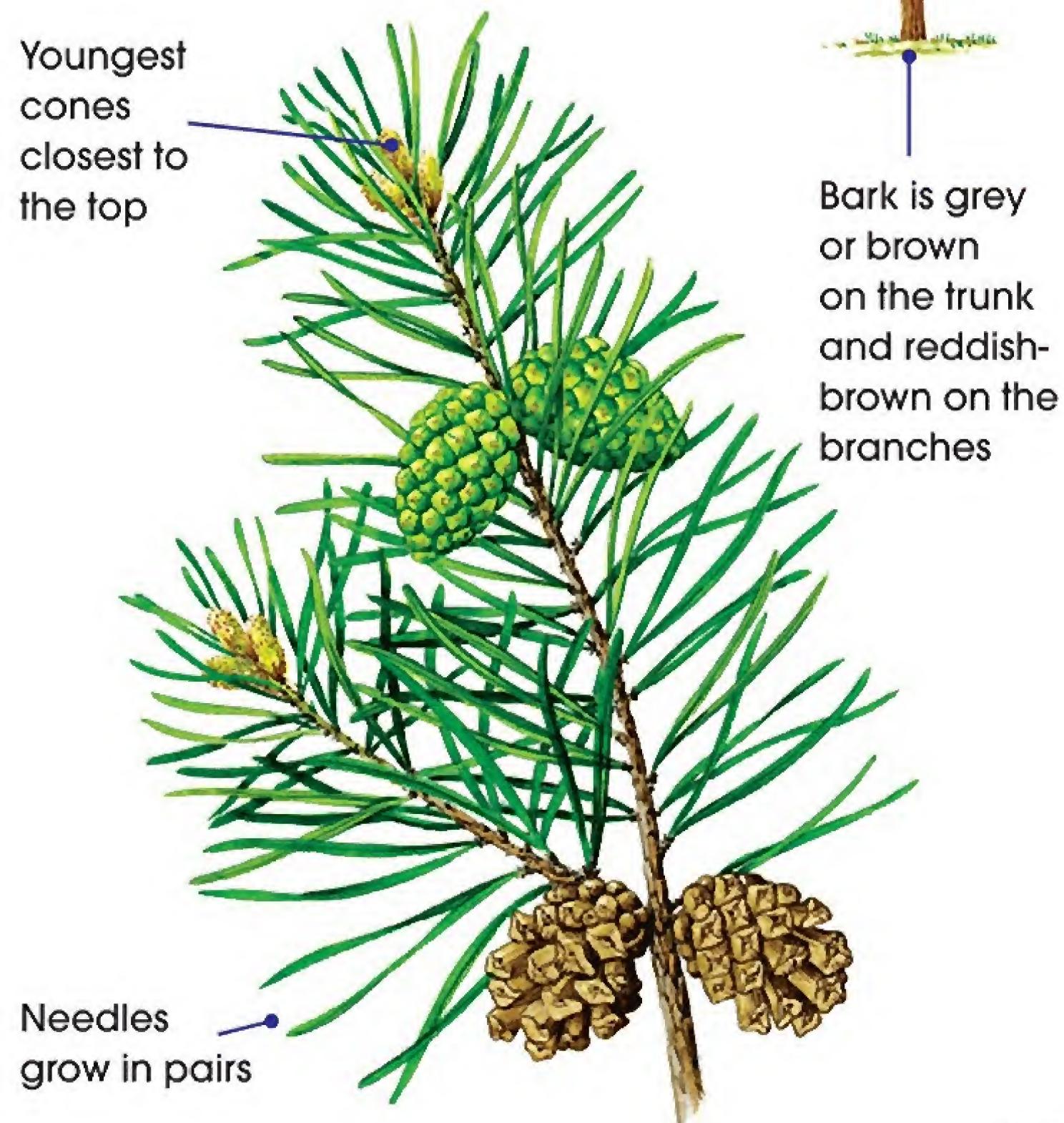
Spruce

Your Christmas tree is probably a spruce. Spruce trees originally grew in northern countries. Now they are also grown here in big woods.



Scots pine

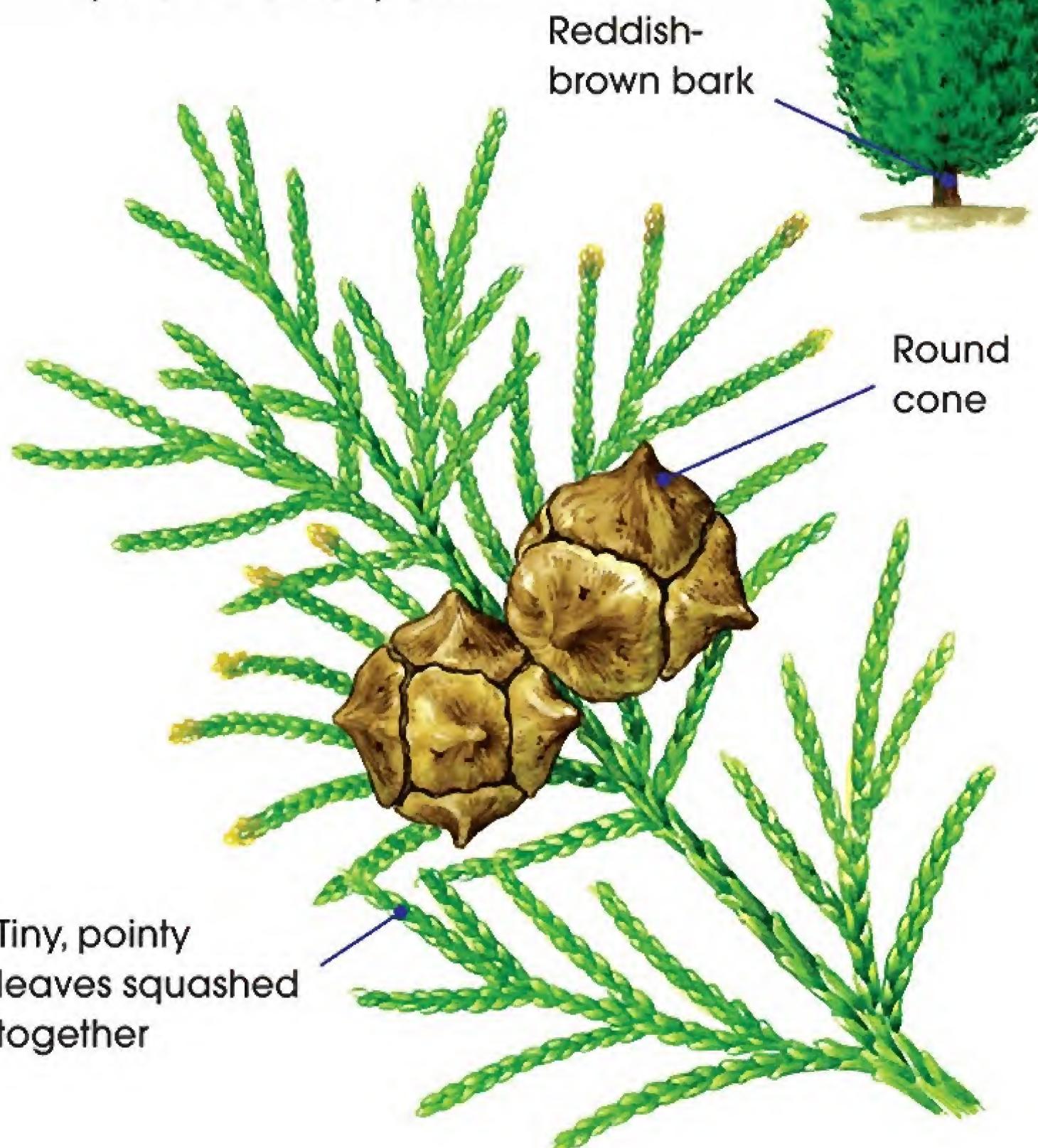
These trees can live for a long time – about 250 years. As they grow old, their trunks get much thicker. The very old trees are known as granny pines.





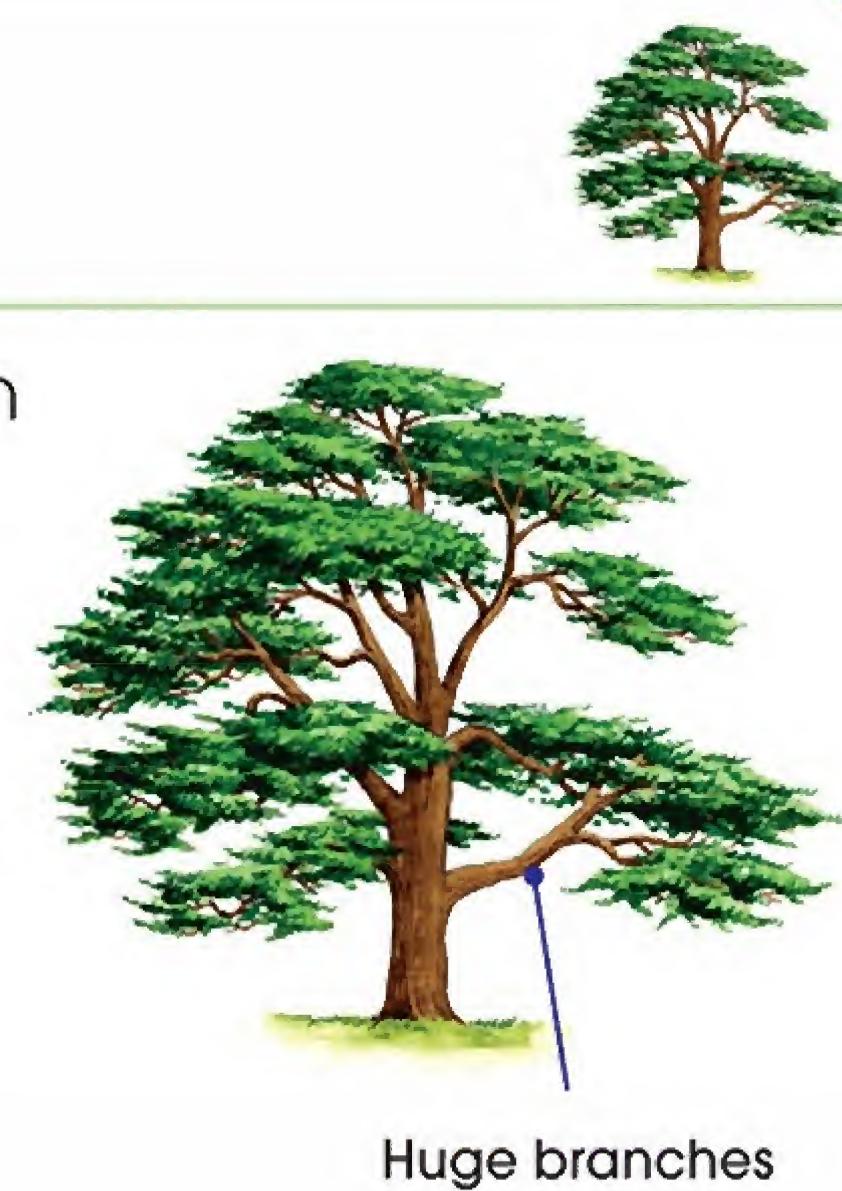
Leyland cypress

Leyland cypress trees are often grown as garden hedges. Sometimes they do turn into proper trees. They can grow taller than you in one year!

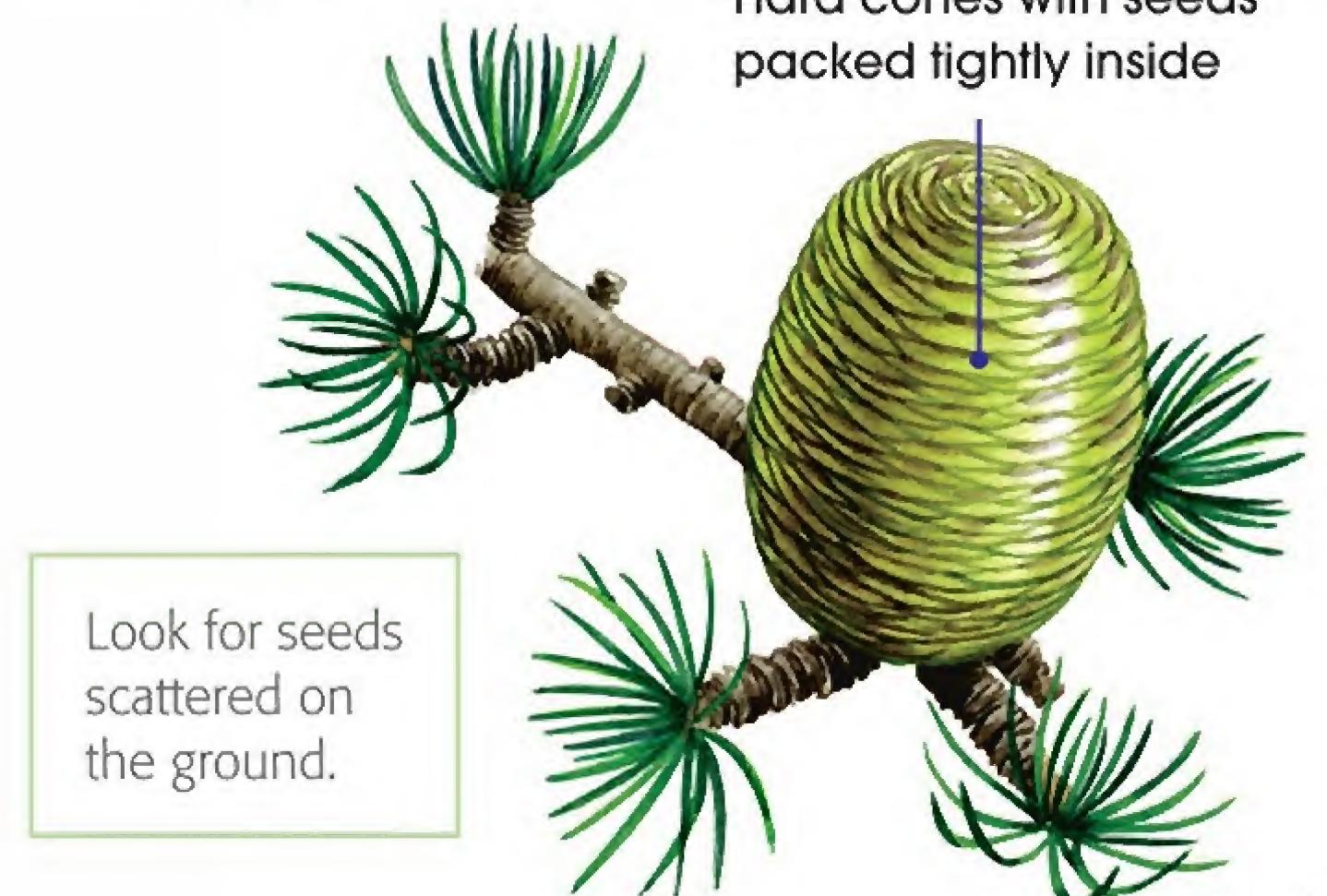


Cedar

This giant tree often grows in parks or in big gardens. It keeps its needles through the winter.



Seeds drop out one by one when the cone is ripe. They leave a bare stalk on the tree.

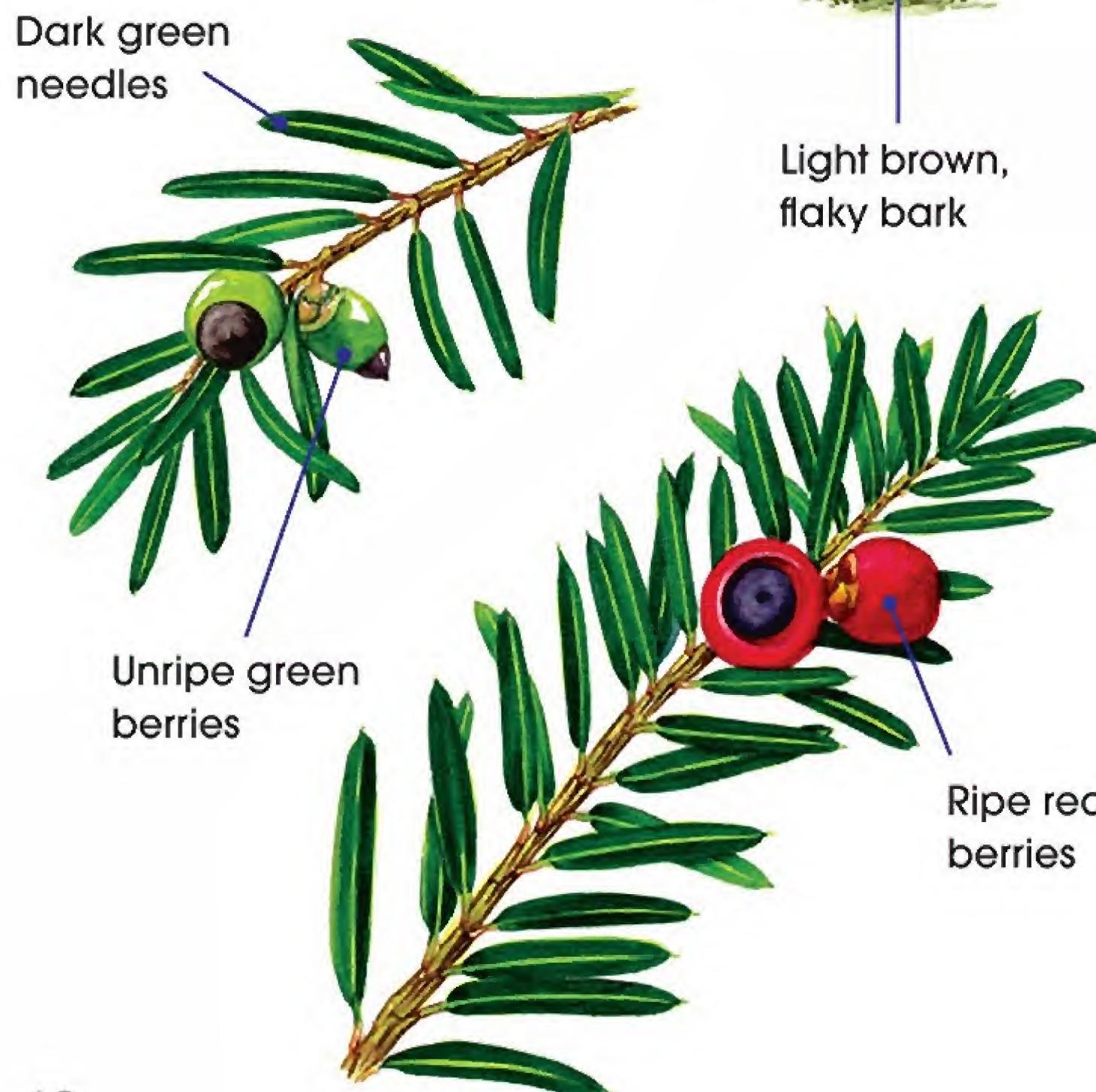


Look for seeds scattered on the ground.



Yew

The yew can live longer than any other tree in Britain. Some yew trees are over a thousand years old. It has pretty berries but they are very poisonous to us.



Useful words

blossom a tree's flowers

bud small growth on a plant that turns into a leaf, flower or shoot

conifer evergreen tree that keeps its leaves in the winter

nectar the sweet liquid that flowers make to attract insects

needles sharp, pointed leaves of evergreen trees

nut fruit with a hard shell

pollen tiny grains that are made in the male parts of a flower

sapling young, skinny tree

Spotter's guide

How many of these trees have you seen?



Silver birch
page 6



Blackthorn
page 11



Holly
page 12



Black poplar
page 7



Aspen
page 8



Sessile oak
page 13



Sallow
page 14



Lime
page 9



Guelder rose
page 10



Alder
page 15



Hazel
page 16



Hornbeam
page 17



Beech
page 18



Cherry
page 23



Sweet chestnut
page 24



English elm
page 19



Crab apple
page 20



Willow
page 25



Sycamore
page 26



Wayfaring tree
page 21



Walnut
page 22



Field maple
page 27



London plane
page 28



Hawthorn
page 29



Common
oak
page 30



Horse chestnut
page 31



Ash
page 32



Larch
page 35



Spruce
page 36



Scots pine
page 37



Leyland cypress
page 38



Rowan
page 33



Elder
page 34



Cedar
page 39



Yew
page 40

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